

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
ALEXANDER POPE.

A. NEW EDITION.

---

*ADORNED WITH PLATES.*

---

VOLUME IV.

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London:

PRINTED FOR F. J. DU ROVERAY,

By T. Bensley, Bolt Court;

AND SOLD BY J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL; AND  
E. LLOYD, HARLEY STREET.

1804.

## C O N T E N T S

of

V O L. IV.

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# SAPPHO TO PHAON.

AN EPISTLE FROM OVID.



Drawn by R. Westall R.A.

Engraved by J. H. Smith.

## SAPPHO TO PHAON.

SAY, lovely youth, that dost my heart command,  
Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's hand?  
Must then her name the wretched writer prove,  
To thy remembrance lost, as to thy love?  
Ask not the cause that I new numbers choose,  
The lute neglected, and the lyric muse;  
Love taught my tears in sadder notes to flow,  
And tun'd my heart to elegies of woe.  
I burn, I burn, as when through ripen'd corn  
By driving winds the spreading flames are borne!  
Phaon to Ætna's scorching fields retires,  
While I consume with more than Ætna's fires!  
No more my soul a charm in music finds;  
Music has charms alone for peaceful minds.  
Soft scenes of solitude no more can please;  
Love enters there, and I'm my own disease.  
No more the Lesbian daines my passion move,  
Once the dear objects of my guilty love;

All other loves are lost in only thine,  
 O youth, ungrateful to a flame like mine!  
 Whom would not all those blooming charms sur-

prise, •

Those heav'nly looks, and dear deluding eyes?  
 The harp and bow would you like Phœbus bear,  
 A brighter Phœbus Phaon might appear;  
 Would you with ivy wreath your flowing hair,  
 Not Bacchus' self with Phaon could compare:  
 Yet Phœbus lov'd, and Bacchus felt the flame,  
 One Daphne warm'd, and one the Cretan dame;  
 Nymphs that in verse no more could rival me;  
 Than e'en those gods contend in charms with thee.  
 The muses teach me all their softest lays,  
 And the wide world resounds with Sappho's praise.  
 Though great Alcæus more sublimely sings,  
 And strikes with bolder rage the sounding strings,  
 No less renown attends the moving lyre,  
 Which Venus tunes, and all her loves inspire;  
 To me what nature has in charms deny'd,  
 Is well by wit's more lasting flames supply'd.  
 Though short my stature, yet my name extends  
 To beav'n itself, and earth's remotest ends.

Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame  
 Inspir'd young Perseus with a gen'rous flame;  
 • Turtles and doves of diff'rent hues unite,  
 And glossy jet is pair'd with shining white.  
 If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign,  
 But such as merit, such as equal thine,  
 By none, alas! by none thou canst be mov'd,  
 Phaon alone by Phaon must be lov'd!  
 Yet once thy Sappho could thy cares employ,  
 Once in her arms you centred all your joy:  
 No time the dear remembrance can remove,  
 For oh! how vast a memory has love?  
 My music, then, you could for ever hear,  
 And all my words were music to your ear.  
 You stopp'd with kisses my enchanting tongue,  
 And found my kisses sweeter than my song.  
 In all I pleas'd, but most in what was best;  
 And the last joy was dearer than the rest.  
 Then with each word, each glance, each motion  
     fir'd,  
 You still enjoy'd, and yet you still desir'd,  
 Till, all dissolving, in the trance we lay,  
 And in tumultuous raptures died away.

The fair Sicilians now thy soul inflame;  
 Why was I born, ye gods! a Lesbian dame?  
 But ah, beware, Sicilian nymphs! nor boast  
 That wand'ring heart which I so lately lost;  
 Nor be with all those tempting words abus'd,  
 Those tempting words were all to Sappho us'd.  
 And you that rule Sicilia's happy plains,  
 Have pity, Venus, on your poet's pains!  
 Shall fortune still in one sad tenor run,  
 And still increase the woes so soon begun?  
 Inur'd to sorrow from my tender years,  
 My parents' ashes drank my early tears;  
 My brother next, neglecting wealth and fame,  
 Ignobly burn'd in a destructive flame:  
 An infant daughter late my griefs increas'd,  
 And all a mother's cares distract my breast.  
 Alas! what more could fate itself impose,  
 But thee, the last, and greatest of my woes?  
 No more my robes in waving purple flow,  
 Nor on my hand the sparkling diamonds glow;  
 No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse  
 The costly sweetness of Arabian dews,  
 Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind,  
 That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind:

For whom should Sappho use such arts ■ these?  
He's gone, whom only she desir'd to please!  
Cupid's light darts my tender bosom move:  
Still is there cause for Sappho still to love:  
So from my birth the sisters fix'd my doom; •  
And gave to Venus all my life to come;  
Or, while my muse in melting notes complains,  
My yielding heart keeps measure to my strains.  
By charms like thine which all my soul have won,  
Who might not—ah! who would not be undone?  
For those Aurora Cephalus might scorn,  
And with fresh blushes paint the conscious morn.  
For those might Cynthia lengthen Phaon's sleep,  
And bid Endymion nightly tend his sheep.  
Venus for those had rapt thee to the skies;  
But Mars on thee might look with Venus' eyes.  
O scarce ■ youth, yet scarce ■ tender boy!  
O useful time for lovers to employ!  
Pride of thy age, and glory of thy race,  
Come to these arms, and melt in this embrace!  
The vows you never will return, receive;  
And take, at least, the love you will not give.  
See, while I write, my words are lost in tears!  
The less my sense, the more my love appears.

Sure 'twas not much to bid one kind adieu,  
(At least to feign was never hard to you)  
Farewell, my Lesbian love, you might have said :  
Or coldly thus, Farewell, O Lesbian maid !  
No tear did you, no parting kiss receive,  
Nor knew I then how much I was to grieve.  
No lover's gift your Sappho could confer,  
And wrongs and woes were all you left with her.  
No charge I gave you, and no charge could give,  
But this, Be ~~mind~~ful of our loves, and live.  
Now by the Nine, those powr's ador'd by me,  
And Love, the god that ever waits on thee,  
When first I heard (from whom I hardly knew)  
That you were fled, and all my joys with you,  
Like some sad statue, speechless, pale, I stood,  
Grief chill'd my breast, and stopt my freezing blood ;  
No sigh to rise, no tear had pow'r to flow,  
Fix'd in ~~■~~stupid lethargy of woe :  
But when its way th' impetuous passion found,  
I rend my tresses, and my breast I wound ;  
I rave, then weep ; I curse, and then complain ;  
Now swell to rage, now melt in tears again.  
Not fiercer pangs distract the mournful dame,  
Whose first-born infant feeds the fun'ral flame.

My scornful brother with a smile appears,  
Insults my woes, and triumphs in my tears,  
His hated image ever haunts my eyes;  
And why this grief? thy daughter lives, he cries.  
Stung with my love, and furious with despair,  
All torn my garments, and my bosom bare,  
My woes, thy crimes, I to the world proclaim,  
Such inconsistent things are love and shame!  
'Tis thou art all my care and my delight,  
My daily longing, and my dream by night:  
O night more pleasing than the brightest day,  
When fancy gives what absence takes away,  
And, dress'd in all its visionary charms,  
Restores my fair deserter to my arms!  
Then round your neck in wanton wreaths I twine,  
Then you, methinks, as fondly circle mine:  
A thousand tender words I hear and speak;  
A thousand melting kisses give and take:  
Then fiercer joys, I blush to mention these,  
Yet, while I blush, confess how much they please.  
But when, with day, the sweet delusions fly,  
And all things wake to life and joy but I,  
As if once more forsaken, I complain,  
And close my eyes to dream of you again:

Then frantic rise, and like some fury rove  
 Through lonely plains, and through the silent grove ;  
 As if the silent grove, and lonely plains,  
 That knew my pleasures, could relieve my pains.  
 I view the grotto, once the scene of love,  
 The rocks around, the hanging roofs above,  
 That charm'd me more, with native moss o'ergrown,  
 Than Phrygian marble, or the Parian stone :  
 I find the shades that veil'd our joys before ;  
 But, Phaon gone, these shades delight no more.  
 Here the press'd herbs with bending tops betray  
 Where oft entwin'd in am'rous folds we lay ;  
 I kiss that earth which once was press'd by you,  
 And all with tears the with'ring herbs bedew.  
 For thee the fading trees appear to mourn,  
 And birds defer their songs till thy return :  
 Night shades the groves, and all in silence lie,  
 All but the mournful philomel and I :  
 With mournful philomel I join my strain,  
 Of Tereus she, of Phaon I complain.

A spring there is, whose silver waters show,  
 Clear as a glass, the shining sands below :  
 A flow'ry lotos spreads its arms above,  
 Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove ;

Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,  
 Watch'd by the sylvan genius of the place.  
 Here as I lay, and swell'd with tears the flood,  
 Before my sight a wat'ry virgin stood:  
 She stood and cry'd, ' O you that love in vain!  
 Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main;  
 There stands a rock, from whose impending steep  
 Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep;  
 There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,  
 Their flames extinguish, and forget to love.  
 Deucalion once with hopeless fury burn'd,  
 In vain he lov'd, relentless Pyrrha scorn'd:  
 But when from hence he plung'd into the main,  
 Deucalion scorn'd, and Pyrrha lov'd in vain.  
 Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw  
 Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below!  
 She spoke, and vanish'd with the voice—I rise,  
 And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes.  
 I go, ye nymphs! those rocks and seas to prove;  
 How much I fear, but ah, how much I love!  
 I go, ye nymphs! where furious love inspires;  
 Let female fears submit to female fires.  
 To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate,  
 And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.

Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,  
 And softly lay me on the waves below !  
 And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,  
 Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main,  
 Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood profane !  
 On Phœbus' shrine my harp I'll then bestow,  
 And this inscription shall be plac'd below :  
 ' Here she who sung, to him that did inspire,  
 Sappho to Phœbus consecrates her lyre ;  
 What suits with Sappho, Phœbus, suits with thee ;  
 The gift, the giver, and the god agree.'

But why, alas ! relentless youth, ah why  
 To distant seas must tender Sappho fly ?  
 Thy charms than those may far more pow'rful be,  
 And Phœbus' self is less a god to me.  
 Ah ! canst thou doom me to the rocks and sea,  
 O far more faithless and more hard than they ?  
 Ah ! canst thou rather see this tender breast  
 Dash'd on these rocks than to thy bosom press'd ?  
 This breast which once, in vain ! you lik'd so well ;  
 Where the loves play'd, and where the muses dwell.  
 Alas ! the muses now no more inspire ;  
 Untun'd my lute, and silent is my lyre ;

My languid numbers have forgot to flow,  
 And fancy sinks beneath a weight of woe.  
 Ye Lesbian virgins, and ye Lesbian dames,  
 Themes of my verse, and objects of my flames,  
 No more your groves with my glad songs shall ring,  
 No more these hands shall touch the trembling string:  
 My Phaon's fled, and I those arts resign;  
 (Wretch that I am, to call that Phaon mine!).  
 Return, fair youth, return, and bring along  
 Joy to my soul, and vigour to my song:  
 Absent from thee, the poet's flame expires;  
 But ah! how fiercely burn the lover's fires?  
 Gods! can no pray'rs, no sighs, no numbers move  
 One savage heart, or teach it how to love?  
 The winds my pray'rs, my sighs, my numbers bear,  
 The flying winds have lost them all in air!  
 Oh when, alas! shall more auspicious gales  
 To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails?  
 If you return—ah why these long delays?  
 Poor Sappho dies while careless Phaon stays.  
 O launch thy bark, nor fear the wat'ry plain;  
 Venus for thee shall smooth her native main.  
 O launch thy bark, ——— of prosp'rous gales;  
 Cupid for thec shall spread the swelling sails.

If you will fly—(yet ah! what cause can be,  
Too cruel youth, that you should fly from me?)  
If not from Phaon I must hope for ease,  
Ah let me seek it from the raging seas:  
To raging seas unpity'd I'll remove,  
And either cease to live or cease to love!

THE  
FABLE OF DRYOPE.

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF  
OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.



THE  
FABLE OF DRYOPE.

SHE said, and for her lost Galanthis sighs;  
When the fair consort of her son replies:  
Since you a servant's ravish'd form bemoan,  
And kindly sigh for sorrows not your own,  
Let me (if tears and grief permit) relate  
A nearer woe, a sister's stranger fate.  
No nymph of all Oechalia could compare  
For beauteous form with Dryope the fair,  
Her tender mother's only hope and pride;  
(Myself the offspring of a second bride.)  
This nymph compress'd by him who rules the day,  
Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,  
Andraemon lov'd; and, bless'd in all those charms  
That pleas'd a god, succeeded to her arms.

A lake there was with shelving banks around,  
Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd.  
These shades, unknowing of the fates, she sought,  
And to the naiads flow'ry garlands brought:

Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she prest  
 Within her arms, and nourish'd at her breast.  
 Not distant far a wat'ry lotos grows;  
 The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs,  
 Adorn'd with blossoms, promis'd fruits that vie  
 In glowing colours with the Tyrian dye:  
 Of these she cropp'd, to please her infant son,  
 And I myself the same rash act had done:  
 But, lo! I saw (as near her side I stood)  
 The violated blossoms drop with blood;  
 Upon the tree I cast a frightful look;  
 The trembling tree with sudden horror shook.  
 Lotis the nymph (if rural tales be true)  
 As from Priapus' lawless lust she flew,  
 Forsook her form, and, fixing here, became  
 A flow'ry plant, which still preserves her name.

This change unknown, astonish'd at the sight  
 My trembling sister strove to urge her flight;  
 And first the pardon of the nymphs implor'd,  
 And those offended sylvan pow'rs ador'd:  
 But when she backward would have fled, she found  
 Her stiff'ning feet were rooted in the ground:  
 In vain to free her fasten'd feet she strove,  
 And — she struggles only moves above;

She feels th' encroaching bark around her grow  
 By quick degrees, and cover all below :  
 Surpriz'd at this, her trembling hand she heaves  
 To rend her hair; her hand is fill'd with leaves :  
 Where late was hair the shooting leaves are seen  
 To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.  
 The child Amphissus, to her bosom prest,  
 Perceiv'd a colder and a harder breast,  
 And found the springs, that ne'er till then deny'd  
 Their milky moisture, on a sudden dry'd.  
 I saw, unhappy! what I now relate,  
 And stood the helpless witness of thy fate,  
 Embrac'd thy boughs, thy rising bark delay'd,  
 There wish'd to grow, and mingle shade with shade.

Behold Andraemon and th' unhappy sire  
 Appear, and for their Dryope inquire:  
 A springing tree for Dryope they find,  
 And print warm kisses on the panting rind.  
 Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,  
 And close embrace as to the roots they grew.  
 The face was all that now remain'd of thee,  
 No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree;  
 Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear,  
 From ev'ry leaf distils a trickling tear;

And straight ■ voice, while yet ■ voice remains,  
 Thus through the trembling boughs in sighs com-  
 plains.

‘ If to the wretched any faith be giv’n,  
 I swear by all th’ unpitying pow’rs of heav’n,  
 No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred;  
 In mutual innocence our lives we led:  
 If this be false, let these new greens decay,  
 Let sounding axes lop my limbs away,  
 And crackling flames on all my honours prey.  
 But from my branching arms this infant bear,  
 Let some kind nurse supply a mother’s care;  
 And to his mother let him oft be led,  
 Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed:  
 Teach him, when first his infant voice shall frame  
 Imperfect words, and lisp his mother’s name,  
 To hail this tree, and say, with weeping eyes,  
 Within this plant my hapless parent lies:  
 And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,  
 Oh! let him fly the crystal lakes and floods,  
 Nor touch the fatal flow’rs; but, warn’d by me,  
 Believe a goddess shrin’d in ev’ry tree.  
 My sire, my sister, and my spouse, farewell!  
 If in your breasts or love or pity dwell,

Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel  
The browsing cattle or the piercing steel.  
Farewell! and since I cannot bend to join  
My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.  
My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,  
While yet thy mother has a kiss to give.  
I can no more; the creeping rind invades  
My closing lips, and hides my head in shades:  
Remove your hands, the bark shall soon suffice  
Without their aid to seal these dying eyes.'

She ceas'd at once to speak and ceas'd to be,  
And all the nymph was lost within the tree;  
Yet latent life through her new branches reign'd,  
And long the plant a human heat retain'd.



# VERTUMNUS AND POMONA.

FROM THE FOURTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.





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Printed by J. Mathew & S.

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1880

## VERTUMNUS AND POMONA.

THE fair Pomona flourish'd in his reign;  
Of all the virgins of the sylvan train  
None taught the trees a nobler race to bear,  
Or more improv'd the vegetable care.  
  
To her the shady grove, the flow'ry field,  
The streams and fountains, no delights could yield  
'Twas all her joy the rip'ning fruits to tend,  
And see the boughs with happy burdens bend.  
  
The hook she bore instead of Cynthia's spear,  
To lop the growth of the luxuriant year,  
To decent forms the lawless shoots to bring,  
And teach th' obedient branches where to spring.  
  
Now the cleft rind inserted graffs receives,  
And yields an offspring more than nature gives;  
Now sliding streams the thirsty plants renew,  
And feed their fibres with reviving dew.

These cares alone her virgin breast employ,  
Averse from Venus and the nuptial joy.

Her private orchards, wall'd on ev'ry side,  
 To lawless sylvans all access deny'd.  
 How oft the satyrs and the wanton fawns,  
 Who haunt the forests or frequent the lawns,  
 The god whose ensign scares the birds of prey,  
 And old Silenus, youthful in decay,  
 Employ'd their wiles and unavailing care  
 To pass the fences, and surprise the fair?  
 Like these Vertumnus own'd his faithful flame,  
 Like these rejected by the scornful dame.  
 To gain her sight a thousand forms he wears;  
 And first a reaper from the field appears:  
 Sweating he walks, while loads of golden grain  
 O'ercharge the shoulders of the seeming swain:  
 Oft o'er his back a crooked scythe is laid,  
 And wreaths of hay his sunburnt temples shade:  
 Oft in his harden'd hand a goad he bears,  
 Like one who late unyok'd the sweating steers:  
 Sometimes his pruninghook corrects the vines,  
 And the loose stragglers to their ranks confines:  
 Now gath'ring what the bounteous year allows,  
 He pulls ripe apples from the bending boughs:  
 A soldier now, he with his sword appears;  
 A fisher next, his trembling angle bears:

Each shape he varies, and each art he tries,  
On her bright charms to feast his longing eyes.

A female form at last ~~Vertumnus wears,~~  
With all the marks of rev'rend age appears,  
His temples, ~~thinly~~ spread with silver hairs:  
Propp'd on his staff, and stooping as he goes,  
A painted mitre shades his furrow'd brows.  
The god in this decrepit form array'd  
The gardens enter'd, and the fruit survey'd;  
And, ' Happy you ! ' he thus address'd the maid,  
' Whose charms as far all other nymphs outshine,  
As other gardens are excell'd by thine !'  
Then kiss'd the fair; (his kisses warmer grow  
Than such as women on their sex bestow)  
Then plac'd beside her on the flow'ry ground,  
Beheld the trees with autumn's bounty crown'd.  
An elm was near, to whose embraces led,  
The curling vine her swelling clusters spread:  
He view'd her twining branches with delight,  
And prais'd the beauty of the pleasing sight.

' Yet this tall elm, but for this vine,' he said,  
' Had stood neglected, and ■ barren shade;  
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround  
Her marry'd elm, had crept along the ground.

Ah! beauteous maid! let this example move  
 Your mind averse from all the joys of love.  
 Deign to be lov'd, and ev'ry heart subdue!  
 What nymph could c'rr attract such crowds as you?  
 Not she whose beauty urg'd the Centaur's arms,  
 Ulysses' queen, nor Helen's fatal charms.  
 E'en now, when silent scorn is all they gain,  
 A thousand court you, though they court in vain,  
 A thousand sylvans, demigods, and gods,  
 That haunt our mountains and our Alban woods.  
 But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,  
 Whom age and long experience render wise,  
 And one whose tender care is far above  
 All that these lovers ever felt of love,  
 (Far more than e'er can by yourself be guess'd)  
 Fix on Vertumnus, and reject the rest:  
 For his firm faith I dare engage my own;  
 Scarce to himself himself is better known.  
 To distant lands Vertumnus never roves;  
 Like you, contented with his native groves;  
 Nor at first sight, like most, admires the fair;  
 For you he lives; and you alone shall share  
 His last affection as his early care.

Besides, he's lovely far above the rest,  
 With youth immortal, and with beauty blest.  
 Add, that he varies ev'ry shape with ease,  
 And tries all forms ~~that may~~ Pomona please.  
 But what ~~should~~ most excite a mutual flame,  
 Your rural cares and pleasures are the same.  
 To him your orchard's early fruits are due;  
 (A pleasing off'ring when 'tis made by you)  
 He values these; but yet, alas! complains  
 That still the best and dearest gift remains.  
 Not the fair fruit that on yon branches glows  
 With that ripe red th' autumnal sun bestows;  
 Nor tasteful herbs that in these gardens rise,  
 Which the kind soil with milky sap supplies;  
 You, only you, can move the god's desire:  
 O crown so constant and so pure a fire!  
 Let soft compassion touch your gentle mind;  
 Think 'tis Vertumnus begs you to be kind:  
 So may no frost, when early buds appear,  
 Destroy the promise of the youthful year;  
 Nor winds, when first your florid orchard blows,  
 Shake the light blossoms from their blasted boughs!  
 This when the various god had urg'd in vain,  
 He straight assum'd his native form again:

## 30

Such, and ■ bright an aspect now he bears,  
As when through clouds th' emerging sun appears,  
And thence exerting his resplendent ray,  
Dispels the ~~darkness~~, and ~~reveals~~ the day.  
Force he prepar'd, but check'd the ~~bold~~ design;  
For when, appearing in a form divine,  
The nymph surveys him, and beholds th<sup>e</sup> grace  
Of charming features and a youthful face,  
In her soft breast consenting passions move,  
And the warm maid confess'd a mutual love.

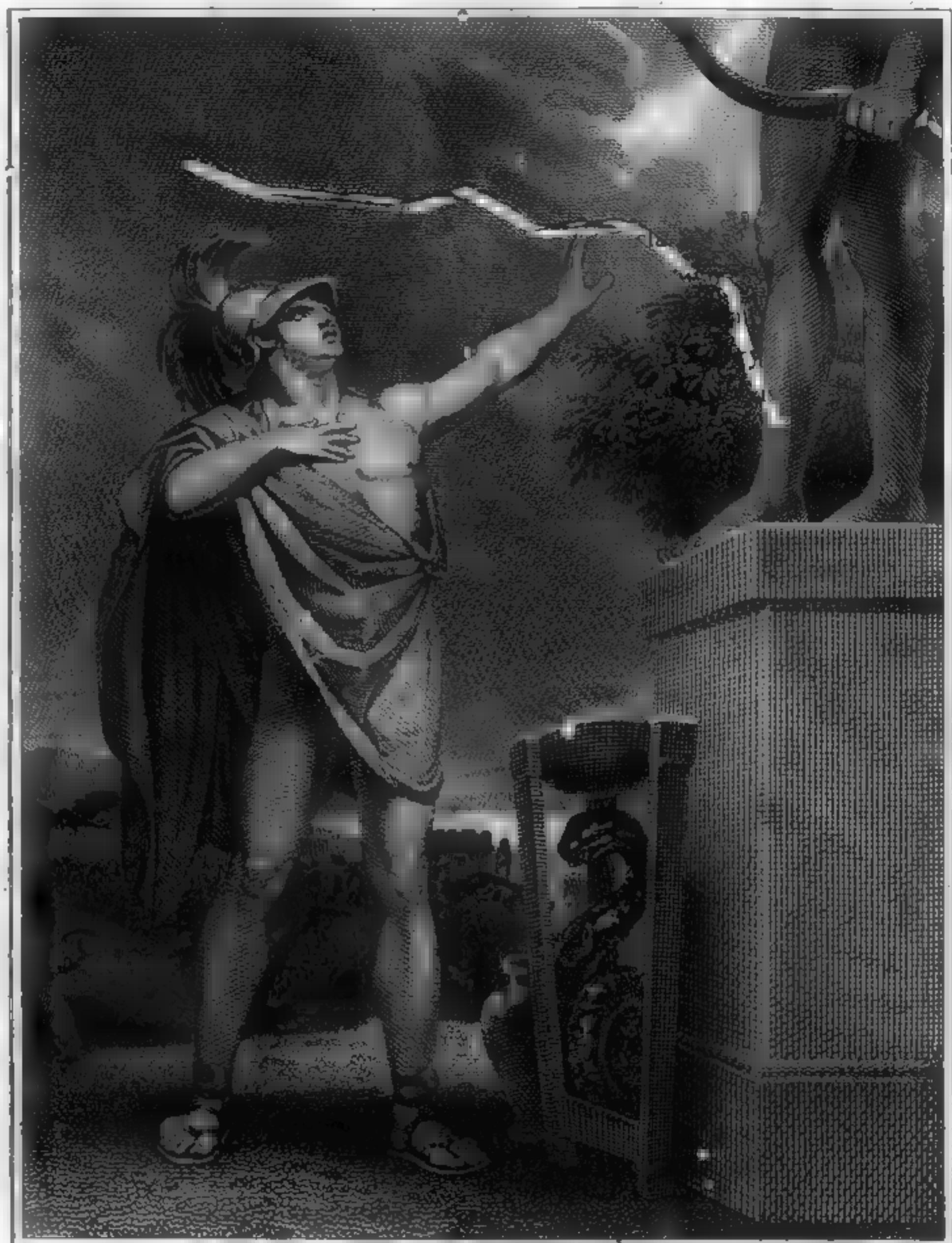
THE  
THEBAIS OF STATIUS.

BOOK I.

*Translated in the year 1703.*

## THE ARGUMENT.

Oedipus king of Thebes having, ~~by mistake~~, slain his father Laius, and married his mother Jocasta, put out his ~~own~~ eyes, and resigned his realm to his sons Eteocles and Polynices. Being neglected by them, he makes his prayer to the fury Tisiphone to sow debate betwixt the brothers. They agree at last to reign singly, each a year by turns, and the first lot is obtained by Eteocles. Jupiter, in a council of the gods, declares his resolution of punishing the Thebans, and Argives also, by means of a marriage betwixt Polynices and one of the daughters of Adrastus king of Argos. Juno opposes, but to no effect; and Mercury is sent on a message to the shades, to the ghost of Laius, who is to appear to Eteocles, and provoke him to break the agreement. Polynices, in the mean time, departs from Thebes by night, is overtaken by a storm, and arrives at Argos; where he meets with Tydeus, who had fled from Calydon, having killed his brother. Adrastus entertains them, having received an oracle from Apollo that his daughters should be married to a boar and a lion, which he understands to be meant of these strangers, by whom the hides of those beasts were worn, and who arrived at the time when he kept an annual feast in honour of that god. The rise of this solemnity. He relates to his guests the loves of Phœbus and Psamathe, and the story of Chorœbus: he inquires, and is made acquainted with their descent and quality. The sacrifice is renewed, and the book concludes with a hymn to Apollo.



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## BOOK I.

FRATERNAL rage the guilty Thebes alarms,  
Th' alternate reign destroy'd by impious arms:  
Demand our song; a sacred fury fires  
My ravish'd breast, and all the muse inspires.  
O goddess! say, shall I deduce my rhymes  
From the dire nation in its early times,  
Europa's rape, Agenor's stern decree,  
And Cadmus searching round the spacious sea?  
How with the serpent's teeth he sow'd the soil,  
And reap'd an iron harvest of his toil?  
Or how from joining stones the city sprung,  
While to his harp divine Amphion sung?  
Or shall I Juno's hate to Thebes resound,  
Whose fatal rage th' unhappy monarch found?  
The sire against the ■ his arrows drew;  
O'er the wide fields the furious mother flew,  
And while her arms ■ second hope contain,  
Sprung from the rocks, and plung'd into the main.

But wave whate'er to Cadmus may belong,  
 And fix, O muse! the barrier of thy song  
 At ~~Oedipus~~—from his disasters trace  
 The long confusions of his guilty race:  
 Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,  
 And mighty Caesar's conqu'ring eagles sing;  
 How twice he tam'd proud Ister's rapid flood,  
 While Dacian mountains stream'd with barb'rous  
 blood;  
 Twice taught the Rhine beneath his laws to roll,  
 And stretch'd his empire to the frozen pole;  
 Or, long before, with early valour strove  
 In youthful arms t' assert the cause of Jove.  
 And thou, great heir of all thy father's fame,  
 Increase of glory to the Latian name!  
 O! bless thy Rome with an eternal reign,  
 Nor let desiring worlds entreat in vain.  
 What though the stars contract their heav'nly space,  
 And crowd their shining ranks to yield thee place;  
 Though all the skies, ambitious of thy sway,  
 Conspire to court thee from our world away;  
 Though Phœbus longs to mix his rays with thine,  
 And in thy glories more serenely shine;

Though Jove himself no less content would be  
 To part his throne and share his heav'n with thee?  
 Yet stay, great Cæsar! ~~and wretched~~ resign  
 O'er the wide earth, and o'er the wat'ry main;  
 Resign to Jove his empire of the skies,  
 And people heav'n with Roman deities.

The time will come when a diviner flame  
 Shall warm my breast to sing of Cæsar's fame;  
 Mean-while permit that my preluding muse  
 In Theban wars an humbler theme may chuse:  
 Of furious hate surviving death she sings,  
 A fatal throne to two contending kings,  
 And fun'ral flames that, parting wide in air,  
 Express the discord of the souls they bear:  
 Of towns dispeopled, and the wand'ring ghosts  
 Of kings unbury'd in the wasted coasts;  
 When Dirce's fountain blush'd with Grecian blood,  
 And Thetis, near Ismenos' swelling flood,  
 With dread beheld the rolling surges sweep  
 In heaps his slaughter'd sons into the deep.

What hero, Clio! wilt thou first relate?  
 The rage of Tydeus, or the prophet's fate?  
 Or how, with hills of slain on ev'ry side,  
 Hippomedon repell'd the hostile tide?

Or how the youth, with ev'ry grace adorn'd,  
Untimely fell, to be for ever mourn'd?

Then to fierce ~~Capaneus~~ thy verse extend,  
And sing with horror his prodigious end.

Now wretched Oedipus, depriv'd o<sup>f</sup> sight,  
Led a long death in everlasting night;  
But while he dwells where not a cheerful ray  
Can pierce the darkness, and abhors the day,  
The clear reflecting mind presents his sin  
In frightful views, and makes it day within;  
Returning thoughts in endless circles roll,  
And thousand furies haunt his guilty soul:  
The wretch then lifted to th' unpitying skies  
Those empty orbs from whence he tore his eyes,  
Whose wounds, yet fresh, with bloody hands he  
strook,

While from his breast these dreadful accents broke.

‘ Ye gods! that o'er the gloomy regions reign,  
Where guilty spirits feel eternal pain;  
Thou, sable Styx! whose livid streams are roll'd  
Thro' dreary coasts, which I though blind behold;  
Tisiphone! that oft hast heard my pray'r,  
Assist, if Oedipus deserve thy care.

If you receiv'd me from Jocasta's womb,  
 And nurs'd the hope of mischiefs yet to come;  
 If, leaving Polybus, I took my way  
 To Cyrrha's temple, on that fatal day  
 When by the son the trembling father dy'd,  
 Where the three roads the Phocian fields divide;  
 If I the Sphynx's riddles durst explain,  
 Taught by thyself to win the promis'd reign;  
 If wretched I, by baleful furies led,  
 With monstrous mixture stain'd my mother's bed,  
 For hell and thee begot an impious blood,  
 And with full lust those horrid joys renew'd;  
 Then, self-condemn'd, to shades of endless night,  
 Forc'd from these orbs the bleeding balls of sight;  
 Oh, hear! and aid the vengeance I require,  
 If worthy thee, and what thou might'st inspire.  
 My sons their old unhappy sire despise,  
 Spoil'd of his kingdom, and depriv'd of eyes;  
 Guideless I wander, unregarded mourn,  
 While these exalt their sceptres o'er my urn;  
 These sons, ye gods! who with flagitious pride  
 Insult my darkness and my groans deride.  
 Art thou a father, unregarding Jove!  
 And sleeps thy thunder in the realms above?

Thou fury! then some lasting curse entail,  
 Which o'er their children's children shall prevail;  
 Place on their heads that crown distain'd with gore,  
 Which these dire hands from my slain father tore;  
 Go! and a parent's heavy curses bear;  
 Break all the bonds of nature, and prepare  
 Their kindred souls to mutual hate and war.  
 Give them to dare, what I might wish to see,  
 Blind — I am, some glorious villainy!  
 Soon shalt thou find, if thou but arm their hands,  
 Their ready guilt preventing thy commands:  
 Couldst thou some great proportion'd mischief frame,  
 They'd prove the father from whose loins they came.

The fury heard, while on Cocytus' brink  
 Her snakes unty'd sulphureous waters drink;  
 But at the summons roll'd her eyes around,  
 And snatch'd the starting serpents from the ground.  
 Not half so swiftly shoots along in air  
 The gliding lightning or descending star.  
 Thro' crowds of airy shades she wing'd her flight,  
 And dark dominions of the silent night;  
 Swift as she pass'd the flitting ghosts withdrew,  
 And the pale spectres trembled at her view:

To th' iron gates of Tenarus she flies,  
 There spreads her dusky pinions to the skies.  
 The day beheld, and, sick'ning at the sight,  
 Veil'd her fair glories in the shades of night.  
 Affrighted Atlas on the distant shore  
 Trembled, and shook the heav'ns and gods he bore.  
 Now from beneath Malea's airy height  
 Aloft she sprung, and steer'd to Thebes her flight ;  
 With eager speed the well-known journey took,  
 Nor here regrets the hell she late forsook.  
 A hundred snakes her gloomy visage shade,  
 A hundred serpents guard her horrid head ;  
 In her sunk eyeballs dreadful meteors glow :  
 Such rays from Phœbe's bloody circle flow,  
 When lab'ring with strong charms she shoots from  
 high  
 A fiery gleam, and reddens all the sky.  
 Blood stain'd her cheeks, and from her mouth there  
 came  
 Blue steaming poisons, and a length of flame.  
 From ev'ry blast of her contagious breath  
 Famine and drought proceed, and plagues and death.  
 A robe obscene was o'er her shoulders thrown,  
 A dress by fates and furies worn alone.

She toss'd her meagre arms; her better hand  
 In waving circles whirl'd a fun'ral brand:  
 A serpent from her left was seen to rear  
 His flaming crest and lash the yielding air.  
 But when the fury took her stand on high,  
 Where vast Cithæron's top salutes the sky,  
 A hiss from all the snaky tire went round:  
 The dreadful signal all the rocks rebound,  
 And through th' Achaian cities send the sound.  
 Oete, with high Parnassus, heard the voice;  
 Eurotas' banks renummur'd to the noise;  
 Again Leucothea shook at these alarms,  
 And press'd Palæmon closer in her arms.  
 Headlong from thence the glowing fury springs,  
 And o'er the Theban palace spreads her wings,  
 Once more invades the guilty dome, and shrouds  
 Its bright pavilions in a veil of clouds.  
 Straight with the rage of all their race possest,  
 Stung to the soul, the brothers start from rest,  
 And all their furies wake within their breast:  
 Their tortur'd minds repining envy tears,  
 And hate, engender'd by suspicious fears;  
 And sacred thirst of sway, and all the ties  
 Of nature broke, and royal perjuries;

And impotent desire to reign alone,  
 That scorus the dull reversion of a throne :  
 Which would the sweets of sov'reign rule devour,  
 While discord waits upon divided pow'r.

As stubborn steers, by bawny ploughmen broke,  
 And join'd reluctant to the galling yoke,  
 Alike disdain with servile necks to bear  
 Th' unwonted weight, or drag the crooked share;  
 But rend the reins, and bound a diff'rent way,  
 And all the furrows in confusion lay :  
 Such was the discord of the royal pair,  
 Whom fury drove precipitate to war.

In vain the chiefs contriv'd a specious way  
 To govern Thebes by their alternate sway :  
 Unjust decree ! while this enjoys the state,  
 That mourns in exile his unequal fate,  
 And the short monarch of a hasty year  
 Foresees with anguish his returning heir.  
 Thus did the league their impious arms restrain,  
 But scarce subsisted to the second reign.

Yet then no proud aspiring piles were rais'd,  
 No fretted roofs with polish'd metals blaz'd ;  
 No labour'd columns in long order plac'd,  
 No Grecian stone the pompous arches grac'd ;

No nightly bands in glitt'ring armour wait  
 Before the sleepless tyrant's guarded gate;  
 No chargers then were wrought in burnish'd gold,  
 Nor silver vases took the forming mould;  
 Nor gems on bowls emboss'd were seen to shine,  
 Blaze on the brims, and sparkle in the wine—  
 Say, wretched rivals! what provokes your rage?  
 Say to what end your impious arms engage?  
 Not all bright Phœbus views in early morn,  
 Or when his ev'ning beams the west adorn,  
 When the south glows with his meridian ray,  
 And the cold north receives a fainter day;  
 For crimes like these not all those realms suffice,  
 Were all those realms the guilty victor's prize!

But fortune now (the lots of empire thrown)  
 Decrees to proud Eteocles the crown;  
 What joys, O tyrant! swell'd thy soul that day,  
 When all were slaves thou couldst around survey,  
 Pleas'd to behold unbounded pow'r thy own,  
 And singly fill a fear'd and envy'd throne!

But the vile vulgar, ever discontent,  
 Their growing fears in secret murmurs vent;  
 Still prone to change, tho' still the slaves of state,  
 And sure the monarch whom they have to hate;

New lords they madly make, then tamely bear,  
 And softly curse the tyrants whom they fear.  
 And one of those who groan beneath the sway  
 Of kings impos'd; and grudgingly obey,  
 (Whom envy to the great, and vulgar spite,  
 With scandal arm'd, th' ignoble mind's delight)  
 Exclaim'd—‘ O Thebes! for thee what fates remain,  
 What woes attend this inauspicious reign?  
 Must we, alas! our doubtful necks prepare  
 Each haughty master's yoke by turns to bear,  
 And still to change whom chang'd we still must fear?  
 These now control a wretched people's fate,  
 These can divide, and these reverse the state:  
 E'en fortune rules no more—O servile land,  
 Where exil'd tyrants still by turns command!  
 Thou sire of gods and men, imperial Jove!  
 Is this th' eternal doom decreed above?  
 On thy own offspring hast thou fix'd this fate  
 From the first birth of ~~our~~ unhappy state,  
 When banish'd Cadmus, wand'ring o'er the main,  
 For lost Europa search'd the world in vain,  
 And fated in Bœotian fields to found  
 A rising empire on a foreign ground,

First rais'd our walls on that ill-omen'd plain  
 Where earth-born brothers were by brothers slain ;  
 What lofty looks th' unrivall'd monarch bears !  
 How all the tyrant in his face appears !  
 What sullen fury clouds his scornful brow !  
 Gods ! how his eyes with threat'ning ardour glow !  
 Can this imperious lord forget to reign,  
 Quit all his state, descend, and serve again ?  
 Yet who before more popularly bow'd ?  
 Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd ?  
 Patient of right, familiar in the throne,  
 What wonder then ? he was not then alone.  
 Oh wretched we ! a vile submissive train,  
 Fortune's tame fools, and slaves in ev'ry reign !

As when two winds with rival force contend,  
 This way and that the wav'ring sails they bend,  
 While freezing Boreas and black Eurus blow,  
 Now here, now there, 'the reeling vessel throw ;  
 Thus on each side, alas ! our tott'ring state \*•  
 Feels all the fury of resistless fate,  
 And doubtful still, and still distracted stands,  
 While that prince threatens, and while this com-  
 mands. '

And now th' almighty father of the gods  
 Convenes a council in the bless'd abodes.  
 Far in the bright recesses of the skies,  
 High o'er the rolling heav'ns, a mansion lies,  
 Whence, far below, the gods at once survey  
 The realms of rising and declining day,  
 And all th' extended space of earth, and air, and sea.  
 Full in the midst, and on a starry throne,  
 The majesty of heav'n superior shone:  
 Serene he look'd, and gave an awful nod,  
 And all the trembling spheres confess'd the god.  
 At Jove's assent the deities around  
 In solemn state the consistory crown'd.  
 Next a long order of inferior pow'rs  
 Ascend from hills, and plains, and shady bow'rs;  
 Those from whose urns thè rolling rivers flow,  
 And those that give the wand'ring winds to blow:  
 Here all their rage and e'en their murmurs cease,  
 And sacred silence reigns, and universal peace.  
 A shining synod of majestic gods  
 Gilds with new lustre the divine abodes;  
 Heav'n seems improv'd with a superior ray,  
 And the bright arch reflects a double day.

The monarch then his solemn silence broke,  
 The still creation listen'd while he spoke;  
 Each sacred accent bears eternal weight,  
 And each irrevocable word is fate.

How long shall man the wrath of heav'n defy,  
 And force unwilling vengeance from the sky?  
 O race confed'rate into crimes, that prove  
 Triumphant o'er th' eluded rage of Jove!  
 This wearied arm can scarce the bolt sustain,  
 And unregarded thunder rolls in vain:  
 Th' o'erlabour'd Cyclop from his task retires,  
 Th' Æolian forge exhausted of its fires.  
 For this I suffer'd Phœbus' steeds to stray,  
 And the mad ruler to misguide the day,  
 When the wide earth to heaps of ashes turn'd,  
 And heav'n itself the wand'ring chariot burn'd:  
 For this my brother of the wat'ry reign  
 Releas'd th' impetuous sluices of the main;  
 But flames consum'd, and billows rag'd in vain.  
 Two races now, ally'd to Jove, offend;  
 To punish these, see Jove himself descend.  
 The Theban kings their line from Cadmus trace,  
 From godlike Perseus those of Argive race.

Unhappy Cadmus' fate who does not know,  
 And the long series of succeeding woe?  
 How oft the furies from the deeps of night  
 Arose, and mix'd with men in mortal fight;  
 Th' exulting mother stain'd with filial blood,  
 The savage hunter and the haunted wood?  
 The direful banquet why should I proclaim,  
 And crimes that grieve the trembling gods to name?  
 Ere I recount the sins of these profane,  
 The sun would sink into the western main,  
 And, rising, gild the radiant east again.  
 Have we not seen (the blood of Laius shed)  
 The murd'ring son ascend his parent's bed,  
 Through violated nature force his way,  
 And stain the sacred womb where once he lay?  
 Yet now in darkness and despair he groans,  
 And for the crimes of guilty fate atones;  
 His sons with scorn their eyeless father view,  
 Insult his wounds, and make them bleed anew.  
 Thy curse, O Oedipus! just heav'n alarms,  
 And sets th' avenging thunderer in arms.  
 I from the root thy guilty race will tear,  
 And give the nations to the waste of war.

Adrastus soon, with gods averse, shall join  
 In dire alliance with the Theban line;  
 Hence strife shall rise, and mortal war succeed;  
 The guilty realms of Tantalus shall bleed:  
 Fix'd is their doom. This all-remem'ring breast  
 Yet harbours vengeance for the tyrant's feast.'

He said; and thus the queen of heav'n return'd:  
 (With sudden grief her lab'ring bosom burn'd)  
 ' Must I, whose cares Phoroneus' tow'rs defend,  
 Must I, O Jove! in bloody wars contend?  
 Thou know'st those regions my protection claim,  
 Glorious in arms, in riches, and in fame:  
 Though there the fair Egyptian heifer fed,  
 And there deluded Argus slept and bled;  
 Though there the brazen tow'r was storm'd of old,  
 When Jove descended in almighty gold!  
 Yet I can pardon those obscurer rapes,  
 Those bashful crimes disguis'd in borrow'd shapes;  
 But Thebes, where, shining in celestial charms,  
 Thou cam'st triumphant to a mortal's arms,  
 When all my glories o'er her limbs were spread,  
 And blazing lightnings danc'd around her bed;  
 Curs'd Thebes the vengeance it deserves may prove—  
 Ah! why should Argos feel the rage of Jove?

Yet since thou wilt thy sister-queen control,  
 Since still the lust of discord fires thy soul,  
 G8, raise my Samos, let Mycene fall,  
 And ~~Scyel~~ with the dust the Spartan wall;  
 No more let mortals Juno's pow'r invoke,  
 Her fanes no more with eastern incense smoke,  
 Nor victims sink beneath the sacred stroke;  
 But to your Isis all my rights transfer,  
 Let altars blaze and temples smoke for her;  
 For her, through Egypt's fruitful clime renown'd,  
 Let weeping Nilus hear the timbrel sound.  
 But if thou must reform the stubborn times,  
 Avenging on the sons the fathers' crimes,  
 And from the long records of distant age  
 Derive incitements to renew thy rage;  
 Say, from what period then has Jove design'd  
 To date his vengeance? to what bounds confin'd?  
 Begin from thence, where first Alpheus hides  
 His wand'ring stream, and through the briny tides  
 Unmix'd to his Sicilian river glides.  
 Thy own Arcadians there the thunder claim,  
 Whose impious rites disgrace thy mighty name;  
 Who raise thy temples where the chariot stood  
 Of fierce Oenomaüs, defil'd with blood;

Where once his steeds their savage banquet found,  
 And human bones yet whiten all the ground.  
 Say, can those honours please? and canst thou Jove  
 Presumptuous Crete, that boasts the tomb of Jove?  
 And shall not Tantalus's kingdoms share  
 Thy wife and sister's tutelary care?  
 Reverse, O Jove! thy too severe decree,  
 Nor doom to war a race deriv'd from thee;  
 On impious realms and barb'rous kings impose  
 Thy plagues, and curse 'em with such sons ■■■  
 those.'

Thus in reproach and pray'r the queen exprest  
 The rage and grief contending in her breast;  
 Unmov'd remain'd the ruler of the sky,  
 And from his throne return'd this stern reply:  
 ' "Twas thus I deem'd thy haughty soul would bear  
 The dire, though just, revenge which I prepare  
 Against a nation thy peculiar care:  
 No less Dione might for Thebes contend,  
 Nor Bacchus less his native town defend;  
 Yet these in silence ■■■ the fates fulfil  
 Their work, and rev'rence our superior will:  
 For by the black infernal Styx I swear,  
 (That dreadful oath which binds the Thunderer)

'Tis fix'd, th' irrevocable doom of Jove;  
 No force can bend me, no persuasion move.  
 Haste then, Cyllenius, through the liquid air;  
 Go, mount the winds, and to the shades repair;  
 Bid hell's black monarch my commands obey,  
 And give up Laius to the realms of day,  
 Whose ghost yet shiv'ring on Cocytus' sand  
 Expects its passage to the farther strand:  
 Let the pale sirc revisit Thebes, and bear  
 These pleasing orders to the tyrant's ear;  
 That from his exil'd brother, swell'd with pride  
 Of foreign forces and his Argive bride,  
 Almighty Jove commands him to detain  
 The promis'd empire, and alternate reign:  
 Be this the cause of more than mortal hate;  
 The rest succeeding times shall ripen into fate.

The god obeys, and to his feet applies  
 Those golden wings that cut the yielding skies;  
 His ample hat his beamy locks o'erspread,  
 And veil'd the starry glories of his head.  
 He seiz'd the wand that causes sleep to fly,  
 Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye;  
 That drives the dead to dark Tartarean coasts,  
 Or back to life compels the wand'ring ghosts.

Thus through the parting clouds the son of May  
 Wings on the whistling winds his rapid way;  
 Now smoothly steers through air his equal flight,  
 Now springs aloft, and tow'rs th' ethereal height;  
 Then wheeling down the steep of heav'n he flies,  
 And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies.

Mean-time the banish'd Polynices roves  
 (His Thebes abandon'd) through th'Aonian groves,  
 While future realms his wand'ring thoughts delight,  
 His daily vision, and his dream by night;  
 Forbidden Thebes appears before his eye,  
 From whence he sees his absent brother fly,  
 With transport views the airy rule his own,  
 And swells on an imaginary throne;  
 Fain would he cast a tedious age away,  
 And live out all in one triumphant day:  
 He chides the lazy progress of the sun,  
 And bids the year with swifter motion run:  
 With anxious hopes his craving mind is tost,  
 And all his joys in length of wishes lost.

The hero then resolves his course to bend  
 Where ancient Danaus' fruitful fields extend,  
 And fam'd Mycene's lofty tow'rs ascend;

(Where late the sun did Atreus' crimes detect,  
 And disappear'd in horror of the feast)  
 And now by chance, by fate, or furies, led,  
 From Bacchus' consecrated caves lie fled,  
 Where the shrill cries of frantic matrons sound,  
 And Pentheus' blood enrich'd the rising ground ;  
 Then sees Cithæron tow'ring o'er the plain,  
 And thence declining gently to the main ;  
 Next to the bounds of Nisus' realm repairs,  
 Where treach'rous Scylla cut the purple hairs ;  
 The hanging cliffs of Scyron's rock explores,  
 And hears the murmurs of the diff'rent shores ;  
 Passes the strait that parts the foaming seas,  
 And stately Corinth's pleasing site surveys.

'Twas now the time when Phœbus yields to night  
 And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light ;  
 Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew  
 Her airy chariot, hung with pearly dew :  
 All birds and beasts lie hush'd : sleep steals away  
 The wild desires of men, and toils of day,  
 And brings, descending through the silent air,  
 A sweet forgetfulness of human care.  
 Yet — red clouds, with golden borders gay,  
 Promise the skies the bright return of day ;

No faint reflections of the distant light  
 Streak with long gleams the scatt'ring shades of night:  
 From the damp earth impervious vapours rise,  
 Increase the darkness, and involve the ~~skies~~  
 At once the rushing winds with roaring sound  
 Burst from th'Eolian caves, and rend the ground;  
 With equal rage their airy quarrel try,  
 And win by turns the kingdom of the sky:  
 But with a thicker night black Auster shrouds  
 The heav'ns, and drives ~~■~~ heaps the rolling clouds,  
 From whose dark womb a rattling tempest pours,  
 Which the cold north congeals to haily show'rs:  
 From pole to pole the thunder roars aloud,  
 And broken lightnings flash from ev'ry cloud.  
 Now smokes with show'rs the misty mountain-ground,  
 And floated fields lie undistinguish'd round:  
 Th' Inachian streams with headlong fury run,  
 And Erasinus rolls a deluge on;  
 The foaming Lerna swells above its bounds,  
 And spreads its ancient poisons o'er the grounds:  
 Where late was dust, now rapid torrents play,  
 Rush thro' the mounds, and bear the dams away:  
 Old limbs of trees, from crackling forests torn,  
 Are whirl'd in air, and on the winds are borne:

The storm the dark Lycæan groves display'd,  
 And first to light expos'd the sacred shade.  
 Th' intrepid Theban heats the bursting sky,  
 Sees yawning rocks in massy fragments fly,  
 And views astonish'd, from the hills afar,  
 The floods descending, and the wat'ry war,  
 That, driv'n by storms, and pouring o'er the plain,  
 Swept herds, and hinds, and houses, to the main.  
 Through the brown horrors of the night he fled,  
 Nor knows, amaz'd, what doubtful path to tread;  
 His brother's image to his mind appears,  
 Inflames his heart with rage, and wings his feet with  
 fears.

So fares the sailor on the stormy main,  
 When clouds conceal Boötes' golden wain,  
 When not a star its friendly lustre keeps,  
 Nor trembling Cynthia glimmers in the deeps;  
 He dreads the rocks, and shoals, and seas, and skies,  
 While thunder roars, and lightning round him flies.

Thus strove the chief, on ev'ry side distress'd;  
 Thus still his courage with his toils increas'd:  
 With his broad shield oppos'd, he forc'd his way  
 Thro' thickest woods, and rous'd the beasts of prey;

Till he beheld where from Larissa's height  
 The shelving walls reflect a glancing light:  
 Thither with haste the Thieban hero flies;  
 On this side Lerna's pois'nous water lies,  
 On that Prosymna's grove and temple rise.  
 He pass'd the gates, which then unguarded lay,  
 And to the regal palace bent his way;  
 On the cold marble, spent with toil, he lies,  
 And waits till pleasing slumbers seal his eyes.

Adrastus here his happy people sways,  
 Bless'd with calm peace in his declining days;  
 By both his parents of descent divine,  
 Great Jove and Phœbus grac'd his noble line:  
 Heav'n had not crown'd his wishes with a son,  
 But two fair daughters heir'd his state and throne.  
 To him Apollo (wond'rous to relate!)  
 But who can pierce into the depths of fate?)  
 Had sung—‘Expect thy sons on Argos' shore,  
 A yellow lion and a bristly boar.’  
 This long revolv'd in his paternal breast,  
 Sat heavy on his heart, and broke his rest;  
 This, great Amphiaraus! lay hid from thee,  
 Though skill'd in fate and dark futurity,

The father's care and prophet's art were vain,  
For thus did the predicting god ordain.

¶ Lo, hapless Tydeus! whose ill-fated hand  
Had slain his brother, leaves his native land,  
And, seiz'd with horror in the shades of night,  
Through the thick deserts headlong urg'd his flight:  
Now by the fury of the tempest driv'n,  
He seeks a shelter from th' inclement heav'n,  
Till, led by fate, the Theban's steps he treads,  
And to fair Argos' open courts succeeds.

When thus the chiefs from diff'rent lands resort  
To Adrastus' realms and hospitable court,  
The king surveys his guests with curious eyes,  
And views their arms and habit with surprise.  
A lion's yellow skin the Theban wears,  
Horrid his mane, and rough with curling hairs;  
Such once employ'd Alcides' youthful toils,  
Ere yet adorn'd with Nemea's dreadful spoils.  
A boar's stiff hide, of Calydonian breed,  
Oenides' manly shoulders overspread;  
Oblique his tusks, erect his bristles stood,  
Alive the pride and terror of the wood.

Struck with the sight, and fix'd in deep amaze,  
The king th' accomplish'd oracle surveys,

Reveres Apollo's vocal caves, and owns  
 The guiding godhead and his future sons :  
 O'er all his bosom secret transports reign,  
 And a glad horror shoots through ev'ry vein.  
 To heav'n he lifts his hands, erects his sight,  
 And thus invokes the silent queen of night.

‘ Goddess of shades ! beneath whose gloomy reign  
 Yon spangled arch glows with the starry train ;  
 You who the cares of heav'n and earth allay,  
 Till nature, quicken'd by th' inspiring ray,  
 Wakes to new vigour with the rising day :  
 O thou ! who freest me from my doubtful state,  
 Long lost and wilder'd in the maze of fate,  
 Be present still, O goddess ! in our aid ;  
 Proceed, and firm those omens thou hast made.  
 We to thy name our annual rites will pay,  
 And on thy altars sacrifices lay ;  
 The sable flock shall fall beneath the stroke,  
 And fill thy temples with a grateful smoke.  
 Hail ! faithful Tripos ! hail ! ye dark abodes  
 Of awful Phœbus ; I confess the gods !’

Thus, seiz'd with sacred fear, the monarch pray'd ;  
 Then to his inner court the guests convey'd,

Where yet thin fumes from dying sparks arise,  
 And dust yet white upon each altar lies,  
 The relics of a former sacrifice.

The King once more the solemn rites requires,  
 And bids renew the feasts and wake the fires.

His train obey, while all the courts around  
 With noisy care and various tumult sound.

Embroider'd purple clothes the golden beds;  
 This slave the floor, and that the table spreads;  
 A third dispels the darkness of the night,  
 And fills depending lamps with beams of light;  
 Here loaves in canisters are pil'd on high,  
 And there in flames the slaughter'd victims fly.  
 Sublime in regal state Adrastus shone,  
 Stretch'd on rich carpets on his iv'ry throne;  
 A lofty couch receives each princely guest;  
 Around, at awful distance, wait the rest.

And now the king, his royal feast to grace,  
 Acestis calls, the guardian of his race,  
 Who first their youth in arts of virtue train'd,  
 And their ripe years in modest grace maintain'd;  
 Then softly whisper'd in her faithful ear,  
 And bade his daughters at the rites appear.

When from the close apartments of the night  
 The royal nymphs approach divinely bright,  
 Such was Diana's, such Minerva's, face,  
 Nor shine their beauties with superior grace,  
 But that in these a milder charm endears,  
 And less of terror in their looks appears.  
 As on the heroes first they cast their eyes,  
 O'er their fair cheeks the glowing blushes rise;  
 Their downcast looks ■ decent shame confess,  
 Then on their father's rev'rend features rest.

The banquet done, the monarch gives the sign  
 To fill the goblet high with sparkling wine,  
 Which Danaus us'd in sacred rites of old,  
 With sculpture grac'd, and rough with rising gold:  
 Here to the clouds victorious Perseus flies,  
 Medusa seems to move her languid eyes,  
 And, e'en in gold, turns paler as she dies:  
 There from the chase Jove's tow'ring eagle bears,  
 On golden wings, the Phrygian to the stars;  
 Still as he rises in th' ethereal height,  
 His native monntains lessen to his sight,  
 While all his sad companions upward gaze,  
 Fix'd on the glorious scene in wild amaze,

And the swift hounds, affrighted as he flies,  
Run to the shade, and bark against the skies.

    This golden bowl with gen'rous juice was crown'd.  
The first libation sprinkled on the ground,  
By turns on each celestial pow'r they call;  
With Phœbus' name resounds the vaulted hall.  
The courtly train, the strangers, and the rest,  
Crown'd with chaste laurel, and with garlands drest,  
While with rich gums the fuming altars blaze,  
Salute the god in num'rous hymns of praise.

    Then thus the king: 'Perhaps, my noble guests!  
These honour'd altars, and these annual feasts  
To bright Apollo's awful name design'd,  
Unknown, with wonder may perplex your mind.  
Great was the cause: our old solemnities  
From no blind zeal or fond tradition rise;  
But sav'd from death, our Argives yearly pay  
These grateful honours to the god of day.

    When by a thousand darts the Python slain  
With orbs unroll'd lay cov'ring all the plain,  
(Transfix'd as o'er Castalia's strains he hung,  
And suck'd new poisons with his triple tongue)  
To Argos' realms the victor god resorts,  
And enters old Crotopos' humble courts.

This rural prince one only daughter bless'd,  
 That all the charms of blooming youth possess'd;  
 Fair was her face, and spotless was her mind,  
 Where filial love with virgin sweetness join'd:  
 Happy! and happy still she might have prov'd,  
 Were she less beautiful, or less belov'd!  
 But Phœbus lov'd, and on the flow'ry side  
 Of Nemea's stream the yielding fair enjoy'd.  
 Now ere ten moons their orb with light adorn,  
 Th' illustrious offspring of the god was born;  
 The nymph, her father's anger to evade,  
 Retires from Argos to the sylvan shade;  
 To woods and wilds the pleasing burden bears,  
 And trusts her infant to a shepherd's cares.

How mean a fate, unhappy child! is thine?  
 Ah! how unworthy those of race divine!  
 On flow'ry herbs in some green covert laid,  
 His bed the ground, his canopy the shade,  
 He mixes with the bleating lambs his cries,  
 While the rude swain his rural music tries,  
 To call soft slumbers on his infant eyes.  
 Yet e'en in those obscure abodes to live  
 Was more, alas! than cruel fate would give;

For on the grassy verdure as he lay,  
 And breath'd the freshness of the early day,  
 Devouring dogs the helpless infant tore,  
 Fed on his trembling limbs, and lapp'd the gore.  
 Th' astonish'd mother, when the rumour came,  
 Forgets her father, and neglects her fame;  
 With loud complaints she fills the yielding air,  
 And beats her breast, and rends her flowing hair;  
 Then wild with anguish to her sire she flies,  
 Demands the sentence, and contented dies.

But touch'd with sorrow for the dead too late,  
 The raging god prepares t' avenge her fate.  
 He sends a monster, horrible and fell,  
 Begot by furies in the depths of hell.  
 The pest a virgin's face and bosom bears;  
 High on her crown a rising snake appears,  
 Guards her black front, and hisses in her hairs:  
 About the realm she walks her dreadful round,  
 When night with sable wings o'erspreads the ground,  
 Devours young babes before their parents' eyes,  
 And feeds and thrives on public miseries.

But gen'rous rage the bold Chorœbus warms,  
 Chorœbus! fam'd for virtue as for arms;

Some few like him, inspir'd with martial flame,  
 Thought ■ short life well lost for endless fame.  
 These, where two ways in equal parts divide,  
 The direful monster from afar descry'd,  
 Two bleeding babes depending at her side;  
 Whose panting vitals, warm with life, she draws,  
 And in their hearts imbrues her cruel claws.  
 The youths surround her with extended spears;  
 But brave Chorœbus in the front appears;  
 Deep in her breast he plung'd his shining sword,  
 And hell's dire monster back to hell restor'd.  
 Th' Inachians view the slain with vast surprise,  
 Her twisting volumes, and her rolling eyes,  
 Her spotted breast and gaping womb imbru'd  
 With livid poison and our children's blood.  
 The crowd in stupid wonder fix'd appear,  
 Pale e'en in joy, nor yet forget to fear.  
 Some with vast beams the squalid corpse engage,  
 And weary all the wild efforts of rage.  
 The birds obscene, that nightly flock'd to taste,  
 With hollow screeches fied the dire repast;  
 And rav'rous dogs, allur'd by scented blood,  
 And starving wolves, ran howling to the wood.

But fir'd with rage, from cleft Parnassus' brow  
 Avenging Phœbus bent his deadly bow,  
 And hissing flew the feather'd fates below:  
 A night of sultry clouds involv'd around  
 The tow'rs, the fields, and the devoted ground:  
 And now a thousand lives together fled,  
 Death with his scythe cut off the fatal thread,  
 And a whole province in his triumph led.

But Phœbus, ask'd why noxious fires appear,  
 And raging Sirius blasts the sickly year?  
 Demands their lives by whom his monster fell,  
 And dooms a dreadful sacrifice to hell.

Bless'd be thy dust, and let eternal fame  
 Attend thy manes, and preserve thy name,  
 Undaunted hero! who, divinely brave,  
 In such a cause disdain'd thy life to save,  
 But view'd the shrine with a superior look,  
 And its upbraided godhead thus bespoke:

“With piety, the soul's surest guard,  
 And conscious virtue, still its own reward,  
 Willing I come, unknowing how to fear,  
 Nor shalt thou, Phœbus, find a suppliant here:  
 Thy monster's death to me was ow'd alone,  
 And 'tis a deed too glorious to disown.

Behold him here, for whom, so many days,  
 Impervious clouds conceal'd thy sullen rays;  
 For whom, as man no longer claim'd thy care,  
 Such numbers fell by pestilential air!  
 But if th' abandon'd race of human kind  
 From gods above no more compassion find ;  
 If such inclemency in heav'n can dwell,  
 Yet why must unoffending Argos feel  
 The vengeance due to this unlucky steel?  
 On me, on me, let all thy fury fall,  
 Nor err from me, since I deserve it all,  
 Unless our desert cities please thy sight,  
 Or fun'ral flames reflect a grateful light.  
 Discharge thy shafts, this ready bosom rend,  
 And to the shades a ghost triumphant send ;  
 But for my country let my fate atone ;  
 Be mine the vengeance, as the crime my own."

Merit distress'd impartial heav'n relieves ;  
 Unwelcome life relenting Phœbus gives ;  
 For not the vengeful pow'r, that glow'd with rage,  
 With such amazing virtue durst engage.  
 The clouds dispers'd, Apollo's wrath expir'd,  
 And from the wond'ring god th' unwilling youth  
 retir'd.

Thence we these altars in his temple raise,  
 And offer annual honours, feasts and praise;  
 These solemn feasts propitious Phœbus please;  
 These honours, still renew'd, his ancient wrath ap-  
 pease.

But say, illustrious guest! (adjoin'd the king)  
 What name you bear, from what high race you  
 spring?

The noble Tydeus stands confess'd, and known  
 Our neighbour prince, and heir of Calydon:  
 Relate your fortunes, while the friendly night  
 And silent hours to various talk invite.'

The Theban bends on earth his gloomy eyes,  
 Confus'd, and sadly thus at length replies:  
 ' Before these altars how shall I proclaim  
 (O gen'rous prince!) my nation or my name,  
 Or through what veins our ancient blood has roll'd?  
 Let the sad tale for ever rest' untold!  
 Yet if, propitious to a wretch unknown,  
 You seek to share in sorrows not your own,  
 Know then from Cadmus I derive my race,  
 Jocasta's son, and Thebes my native place.'  
 To whom the king (who felt his gen'rous breast  
 Touch'd with concern for his unhappy guest)

Replies—‘ Ah! why forbears the son to name  
 His wretched father, known too well by fame?  
 Fame, that delights around the world to stray,  
 Scorns not to take our Argos in her way.  
 E’en those who dwell where suns at distance roll,  
 In northern wilds, and freeze beneath the pole,  
 And those who tread the burning Libyan lands,  
 The faithless syrtes, and the moving sands;  
 Who view the western sea’s extremest bounds,  
 Or drink of Ganges in their eastern grounds;  
 All these the woes of Oedipus have known,  
 Your fates, your furies, and your haunted town.  
 If on the sons the parents’ crimes descend,  
 What prince from those his lineage can defend?  
 Be this thy comfort, that ’tis thine t’ efface,  
 With virtuous acts, thy ancestors’ disgrace,  
 And be thyself the honour of thy race.  
 But see! the stars begin to steal away,  
 And shine more faintly at approaching day;  
 Now pour the wine; and in your tuneful lays  
 Once more resound the great Apollo’s praise.’

‘ O father Phœbus! whether Lycia’s coast  
 And snowy mountains thy bright presence boast;

Whether to sweet Castalia thou repair,  
And bathe in silver dews thy yellow hair;  
Or pleas'd to find fair Delos float no more,  
Delight in Cynthus and the shady shore;  
Or choose thy seat in Ilion's proud abodes,  
The shining structures rais'd by lab'ring gods:  
By thee the bow and mortal shafts are borne;  
Eternal charms thy blooming youth adorn:  
Skill'd in the laws of secret fate above,  
And the dark counsels of almighty Jove,  
'Tis thine the seeds of future war to know,  
The change of sceptres and impending woe,  
When direful meteors spread through glowing air  
Long trails of light, and shake their blazing hair.  
Thy rage the Phrygian felt, who durst aspire  
To excel the music of thy heav'nly lyre;  
Thy shafts aveng'd lewd Tityus' guilty flame,  
Th' immortal victim of thy mother's fame;  
Thy hand slew Python, and the dame who lost  
Her num'rous offspring for a fatal boast.  
In Phlegyas' doom thy just revenge appears,  
Condemn'd to furies and eternal fears;  
He views his food, but dreads, with lifted eye,  
The mould'ring rock that trembles from on high.

Propitious hear our pray'r, O pow'r divine!  
And on thy hospitable Argos shine;  
Whether the style of Ty~~can~~ please thee more,  
Whose purple rays th' Achæmenes adore;  
Or great Osiris, who first taught the swain  
In Pharian fields to sow the golden grain;  
Or Mithra, to whose beams the Persian bows,  
And pays, in hollow rocks, his awful vows;  
Mithra! whose head the blaze of light adorns,  
Who grasps the struggling heifer's lunar horns.'

THE  
TEMPLE OF FAME.

*Written in the year 1711.*

## A DVERTISEMENT.

The hint of the following piece was taken from Chaucer's House of Fame. The design is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and ■■■ of the particular thoughts my own: yet I could not suffer it to be printed without this acknowledgment. The reader who would compare this with Chaucer, may begin with his third book of Fame, there being nothing in the two first books that answer to their title. P

THE  
TEMPLE OF FAME.

IN that soft season, when descending show'rs  
Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flow'rs;  
When op'ning buds salute the welcome day,  
And earth relenting feels the genial ray;  
As balmy sleep had charm'd my cares to rest,  
And love itself was banish'd from my breast,  
(What time the morn mysterious visions brings,  
While purer slumbers spread their golden wings)  
A train of phantoms in wild order rose,  
And join'd, this intellectual scene compose.

I stood, methought, betwixt earth, seas, and  
skies,  
The whole creation open to my eyes:  
In air self-balanc'd hung the globe below,  
Where mountains rise and circling oceans flow;  
Here naked rocks, and empty wastes were seen,  
There tow'ry cities, and the forests green;

Here sailing ships delight the wand'ring eyes;  
 There trees and intermingled temples rise:  
 Now a clear sun the shining scene displays,  
 The transient landscape now in clouds decays.

O'er the wide prospect as I gaz'd around,  
 Sudden I heard a wild promiscuous sound,  
 Like broken thunders that at distance roar,  
 Or billows murmur'ring on the hollow shore:  
 Then gazing up, a glorious pile beheld,  
 Whose tow'ring summit ambient clouds conceal'd.  
 High on a rock of ice the structure lay,  
 Steep its ascent, and slipp'ry was the way;  
 The wondrous rock like Parian marble shone,  
 And seem'd, to distant sight, of solid stone.  
 Inscriptions here of various names I view'd,  
 The greater part by hostile time subdu'd;  
 Yet wide was spread their fame in ages past,  
 And poets once had promis'd they should last.  
 Some fresh engrav'd appear'd of wits renown'd;  
 I look'd again, nor could their trace be found.  
 Critics I saw, that other names deface,  
 And fix their own, with labour, in their place:  
 Their own, like others, — their place resign'd,  
 Or disappear'd, and left the first behind.

Nor was the work impair'd by storms alone,  
 But felt th' approaches of too warm a sun;  
 For fame, impatient of extremes, decays  
 Not more by envy than excess of praise.  
 Yet part no injuries of heav'n could feel,  
 Like crystal faithful to the graving steel:  
 The rock's high summit, in the temple's shade,  
 Nor heat could melt, nor beating storm invade.  
 Their names inscrib'd unnumber'd ages past  
 From time's first birth, with time itself shall last;  
 These ever new, nor subject to decays,  
 Spread, and grow brighter with the length of days.

So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of frost)  
 Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;  
 Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,  
 And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play;  
 Eternal snows the growing mass supply,  
 Till the bright mountains prop th' incumbent sky:  
 As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,  
 The gather'd winter of a thousand years.  
 On this foundation fame's high temple stands;  
 Stupendous pile! not rear'd by mortal hands.  
 Whate'er proud Rome or artful Greece beheld,  
 Or elder Babylon, its frame excell'd.

Four faces had the dome, and ev'ry face  
 Of various structure, but of equal grace:  
 Four brazen gates, ■■ columns lifted high,  
 Salute the diff'rent quarters of the sky.  
 Here fabled chiefs in darker ages born,  
 Or worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn,  
 Who cities rais'd, or tain'd a monstrous race,  
 The walls in venerable order grace:  
 Heroes in animated marble frown,  
 And legislators seem to think in stone.

Westward, a sumptuous frontispiece appear'd,  
 On doric pillars of white marble rear'd,  
 Crown'd with an architrave of antique mold,  
 And sculpture rising on the roughen'd gold.  
 In shaggy spoils here Theseus was beheld,  
 And Perseus dreadful with Minerva's shield:  
 There great Alcides, stooping with his toil,  
 Rests on his club, and holds th' Hesperian spoil:  
 Here Orpheus sings; trees moving to the sound,  
 Start from their roots, and form a shade around:  
 Amphion there the loud creating lyre  
 Strikes, and beholds a sudden Thebes aspire!  
 Cythæron's echoes answer to his call,  
 And half the mountain rolls into ■ wall:

There might you see the length'ning spires ascend,  
 The domes swell up, the wid'ning arches bend,  
 The growing tow'rs, like exhalations rise,  
 And the huge columns heave into the skies.

The eastern front was glorious to behold,  
 With di'mond flaming, and barbaric gold.  
 There Ninus shone, who spread th' Assyrian fame,  
 And the great founder of the Persian name:  
 There in long robes the royal magi stand,  
 Grave Zoroaster waves the circling wand;  
 The sage Chaldeans rob'd in white appear'd,  
 And brachmans, deep in desert woods rever'd.  
 These stopp'd the moon, and call'd th' unbody'd  
 shades

To midnight banquets in the glimm'ring glades;  
 Made visionary fabrics round them rise,  
 And airy spectres skim before their eyes;  
 Of talismans and sigils knew the pow'r,  
 And careful watch'd the planetary hour.  
 Superior, and alone, Confucius stood,  
 Who taught that useful science, to be good.  
 But on the south, a long majestic race  
 Of Egypt's priests the gilded niches grace,

Who measur'd earth, describ'd the starry spheres,  
And trac'd the long records of lunar years.

High on his car Sesostris struck my view,  
Whom sceptred slaves in golden harness drew:

His hands a bow and pointed jav'lin hold;

His giant limbs are arm'd in scales of gold.

Between the statues obelisks were plac'd,

And the learn'd walls with hieroglyphics grac'd.

Of gothic structure was the northern side,  
O'erwrought with ornaments of barb'rous pride.

There huge colosses rose, with trophies crown'd,

And runic characters were grav'd around:

There sat Xamolxis with erected eyes,

And Odin here in mimic trances dies.

There on rude iron columns, smear'd with blood,

The horrid forms of Scythian heroes stood,

Druids and bards (their once loud harps unstrung),

And youths that died to be by poets sung.

These and a thousand more of doubtful fame,

To whom old fables gave a lasting name,

In ranks adorn'd the temple's outward face;

The wall in lustre and effect like glass,

Which o'er each object casting various dyes,

Enlarges some, and others multiplies:

Nor void of emblem ■■■ the mystic wall,  
For thus romantic fame increases all.

The temple shakes, the sounding gates unfold,  
Wide vaults appear, and roofs of fretted gold,  
Rais'd on'a thousand pillars, wreath'd around  
With laurel foliage, and with eagles crown'd:  
Of bright transparent beryl were the walls,  
The friezes gold, and gold the capitals:  
As heav'n with stars, the roof with jewels glows,  
And ever-living lamps depend in rows.  
Full in the passage of each spacious gate,  
The sage historians in white garments wait;  
Grav'd o'er their seats the form of time was found,  
His scythe revers'd, and both his pinions bound.  
Within stood heroes, who through loud alarms  
In bloody fields pursu'd renown in arms.  
High on ■ throne, with trophies charg'd, I view'd  
The youth that all things but himself subdu'd;  
His feet on sceptres and tiaras trod,  
And his horn'd head bely'd the Libyan god.  
There Cæsar, grac'd with both Minervas, shone;  
Cæsar, the world's great master, and his own;  
Unmov'd, superior still in ev'ry state,  
And scarce detested in his country's fate.

But chief were those who not for empire fought,  
 But with their toils their people's safety bought:  
**H**igh o'er the rest Epaminondas stood;  
 Timoleon, glorious in his brother's blood;  
 Bold Scipio, saviour of the Roman state,  
 Great in his triumphs. in retirement great;  
 And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind  
 With boundless pow'r unbounded virtue join'd,  
 His own strict judge, and patron of mankind.

**M**uch-suff'ring heroes next their honours claim,  
 Those of less noisy, and less guilty fame,  
 Fair virtue's silent train: supreme of these  
 Here ever shines the godlike Socrates:  
 He whom ungrateful Athens could expel,  
 At all times just, but when he sign'd the shell:  
 Here his abode the martyr'd Phocion claims,  
 With Agis, not the last of Spartan names:  
 Unconquer'd Cato shews the wound he tore,  
 And Brutus his ill genius meets no more.

**B**ut in the centre of the hallow'd choir,  
 Six pompous columns o'er the rest aspire;  
 Around the shrine itself of fame they stand,  
 Hold the chief honours, and the fane command.

High on the first the mighty Homer shone;  
 Eternal adamant compos'd his throne;  
 Father of verse! in holy fillets drest,  
 His silver beard wav'd gently o'er his breast;  
 Though blind, a boldness in his looks appears;  
 In years he seem'd, but not impair'd by years.  
 The wars of Troy were round the pillar seen:  
 Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian queen;  
 Here Hector glorious from Patroclus' fall;  
 Here dragg'd in triumph round the Trojan wall.  
 Motion and life did ev'ry part inspire,  
 Bold was the work, and prov'd the master's fire;  
 A strong expression most he seem'd t' affect,  
 And here and there disclos'd a brave neglect.

A golden column next in rank appear'd,  
 On which a shrine of purest gold was rear'd;  
 Finish'd the whole, and labour'd ev'ry part,  
 With patient touches of unweary'd art.

The Mantuan there in sober triumph sate,  
 Compos'd his posture, and his looks sedate;  
 On Homer still he fix'd ■ rev'rend eye,  
 Great without pride, in modest majesty.  
 In living sculpture ■ the sides were spread  
 The Latian wars, and haughty Turnus dead;

Eliza stretch'd upon the fun'ral pyre;  
 Æneas bending with his aged sire:  
 Troy flam'd in burning gold, and o'er the throne  
 ' Arms and the man' in golden cyphers shone.

Four swans sustain a car of silver bright,  
 With heads advanc'd, and pinions stretch'd for flight:  
 Here, like some furious prophet, Pindar rode,  
 And seem'd to labour with th' inspiring god.  
 Across the harp a careless hand he flings,  
 And boldly sinks into the sounding strings.  
 The figur'd games of Greece the column grace;  
 Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race:  
 The youths hang o'er their chariots as they run;  
 The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone;  
 The champions in distorted postures threat;  
 And all appear'd irregularly great.

Here happy Horace tun'd th' Ausonian lyre  
 To sweeter sounds, and temper'd Pindar's fire;  
 Pleas'd with Alcæus' manly rage t' infuse  
 The softer spirit of the Sapphic muse.  
 The polish'd pillar diff'rent sculptures grace,  
 A work outlasting monumental brass.  
 Here smiling loves and bacchanals appear,  
 The Julian star, and great Augustus here:

The doves, that round the infant poet spread  
Myrtles and bays, hang hov'ring o'er his head.

Here, in a shrine that cast a dazzling light,  
Sate fix'd in thought the mighty Stagirite;  
His sacred head a radiant zodiac crown'd,  
And various animals his sides surround;  
His piercing eyes, erect, appear to view  
Superior worlds, and look all nature through.

With equal rays immortal Tully shone;  
The Roman rostra deck'd the consul's throne:  
Gath'ring his flowing robe, he seem'd to stand  
In act to speak, and graceful stretch'd his hand.  
Behind, Rome's genius waits with civic crowns,  
And the great father of his country owns.

These massy columns in a circle rise,  
O'er which a pompous dome invades the skies:  
Scarce to the top I stretch'd my aching sight,  
So large it spread, and swell'd to such a height.  
Full in the midst proud fame's imperial seat  
With jewels blaz'd, magnificently great;  
The vivid em'ralds there revive the eye,  
The flaming rubies shew their sanguine dye,  
Bright azure rays from lively sapphires stream,  
And lucid amber casts a golden gleam.

With various-colour'd light the pavement shone,  
 And all on fire appear'd the glowing throne;  
 The dome's high arch reflects the mingled blaze,  
 And forms a rainbow of alternate rays.

When on the goddess first I cast my sight,  
 Scarce seem'd her stature of a cubit's height;  
 But swell'd to larger size, the more I gaz'd,  
 Till to the roof her tow'ring front she rais'd.  
 With her, the temple ev'ry moment grew,  
 And ampler vistas open'd to my view:  
 Upward the columns shoot, the roofs ascend,  
 And arches widen, and long aisles extend.  
 Such was her form, as ancient bards have told;  
 Wings raise her arms, and wings her feet infold;  
 A thousand busy tongues the goddess bears,  
 A thousand open eyes, and thousand list'ning ears.  
 Beneath, in order rang'd, the tuneful nine  
 (Her virgin handmaids) still attend the shrine;  
 With eyes on fame for ever fix'd, they sing;  
 For fame they raise the voice, and tune the string;  
 With time's first birth began the heav'nly lays,  
 And last, eternal, through the length of days.

Around these wonders as I cast a look,  
 The trumpet sounded, and the temple shook.

And all the nations summon'd at the call,  
 From diff'rent quarters fill the crowded hall.  
 Of various tongues the mingled sounds were heard ;  
 In various garbs promiscuous throngs appear'd :  
 Thick as the bees, that with the spring renew  
 Their flow'ry toils, and sip the fragrant dew,  
 When the wing'd colonies first tempt the sky,  
 O'er dusky fields and shaded waters fly,  
 Or, settling, seize the sweets the blossoms yield,  
 And a low murmur runs along the field.  
 Millions of suppliant crowds the shrine attend,  
 And all degrees before the goddess bend ;  
 The poor, the rich, the valiant, and the sage,  
 And boasting youth, and narrative old age.  
 Their pleas were diff'rent, their request the same ;  
 For good and bad alike are fond of fame.  
 Some she disgrac'd, and some with honours crown'd ;  
 Unlike successes equal merits found.  
 Thus her blind sister, fickle fortune, reigns,  
 And, undiscerning, scatters crowns and chains.  
 First at the shrine the learned world appear,  
 And to the goddess thus prefer their pray'r :  
 Long have we sought t' instruct and please mankind,  
 With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind ;

But thank'd by few, rewarded yet by none,  
 We here appeal to thy superior throne:  
 On wit and learning the just prize bestow,  
 For fame is all we must expect below.

The goddess heard, and bade the muses raise  
 The golden trumpet of eternal praise:  
 From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,  
 That fills the circuit of the world around;  
 Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud,  
 The notes at first were rather sweet than loud;  
 By just degrees they ev'ry moment rise,  
 Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.  
 At ev'ry breath were balmy odours shed,  
 Which still grew sweeter as they wider spread:  
 Less fragrant scents th' unfolding rose exhales,  
 Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.

Next these the good and just, an awful train,  
 Thus on their knees address'd the sacred fane:  
 Since living virtue is with envy curs'd,  
 And the best men are treated like the worst,  
 Do thou, just goddess, call our merits forth,  
 And give each deed th' exact intrinsic worth.  
 Not with bare justice shall your act be crown'd,  
 (Said fame) but high above desert renown'd:

Let fuller notes th' applauding world amaze,  
And the loud clarion labour in your praise.

This band dismiss'd, behold another crowd  
Preferr'd the same request, and lowly bow'd;  
The constant tenor of whose well-spent days  
No less deserv'd a just return of praise.  
But straight the direful trump of slander sounds;  
Through the big dome the doubling thunder bounds;  
Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,  
The dire report through ev'ry region flies,  
In ev'ry ear incessant rumours rung,  
And gath'ring scandals grew on ev'ry tongue.  
From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke  
Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling smoke:  
The pois'nous vapour blots the purple skies,  
And withers all before it as it flies.

A troop came next, who crowns and armour wore,  
And proud defiance in their looks they bore:  
For thee (they cried) amidst alarms and strife,  
We sail'd in tempests down the stream of life;  
For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and blood,  
And swam to empire through the purple flood:  
Those ills we dar'd, thy inspiration own;  
What virtue seem'd, was done for thee alone.

Ambitious fools! (the queen reply'd, and frown'd)  
 Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd;  
 There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,  
 Your statues moulder'd, and your names unknown!  
 A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from my  
 sight,

And each majestic phantom sunk in night.

Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen;  
 Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien.  
 Great idol of mankind! we neither claim  
~~True praise~~ of merit, nor aspire to fame!  
 But safe in deserts from th' applause of men,  
 Would die unheard of, as we liv'd unseen;  
 'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight  
 Those acts of goodness which themselves requite.  
 O let us still the secret joy partake,  
 To follow virtue e'en for virtue's sake.

And live there men who slight immortal fame?  
 Who then with incense shall adore our name?  
 But, mortals! know, 'tis still our greatest pride  
 To blaze those virtues which the good would hide.  
 Rise! muses, rise! add all your tuneful breath,  
 These must not sleep in darkness and in death.

She said: in air the trembling music floats,  
 And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;  
 So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,  
 E'en list'ning angels lean'd from heav'n to hear:  
 To farthest shores th' ambrosial spirit flies,  
 Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

Next these youthful train their vows express'd,  
 With feathers crown'd, with gay embroid'ry dress'd:  
 Hither, they cry'd, direct your eyes, and see  
 The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry;  
 Ours is the place at banquets, balls, and plays,  
 Sprightly our nights, polite are all our days;  
 Courts we frequent, where 'tis our pleasing care  
 To pay due visits, and address the fairs  
 In fact, 'tis true, no nymph we could persuade,  
 But still in fancy vanquish'd ev'ry maid;  
 Of unknown duchesses lewd tales we tell,  
 Yet, would the world believe us, all were well;  
 The joy let others have, and we the name,  
 And what we want in pleasure, grant in fame.

The queen assents: the trumpet rends the skies,  
 And at each blast a lady's honour dies.

Pleas'd with the strange success, vast numbers prest  
 Around the shrine, and made the same request:

What, you (she cry'd), unlearn'd in arts to please,  
 Slaves to yourselves, and e'en fatigu'd with ease,  
 Who lose ■ length of undeserving days,  
 Would you usurp the lover's dear-bought praise?  
 To just contempt, ye vain pretenders! fall,  
 The people's fable, and the scorn of all.  
 Straight the black clarion sends a horrid sound,  
 Loud laughs burst out, and bitter scoffs fly round,  
 Whispers are heard, with taunts reviling loud,  
And scornful hisses run through all the crowd.

Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs  
 done,

Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;  
 Or who their glory's dire foundation laid  
 On sov'reigns ruin'd, or on friends betray'd;  
 Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could fix,  
 Of crooked counsels and dark politics;  
 Of these a gloomy tribe surround the throne,  
 And beg to make th' immortal treasons known.  
 The trumpet roars, long flaky flames expire,  
 With sparks that seem'd to set the world on fire.  
 At the dread sound pale mortals stood aghast,  
 And startled nature trembled with the blast.

This having heard and seen, some pow'r unknown  
 Straight chang'd the scene, and snatch'd me from  
 the throne.

Before my view appear'd a structure fair,  
 Its site uncertain, if in earth or air;  
 With rapid motion turn'd the mansion round;  
 With ceaseless noise the ringing walls resound:  
 Not less in number were the spacious doors  
 Than leaves on trees, or sands upon the shores;  
 Which still unfolded stand, by night, by day,  
 Pervious to winds, and open ev'ry way.  
 As flames by nature to the skies ascend,  
 As weighty bodies to the centre tend,  
 As to the sea returning rivers roll,  
 And the touch'd needle trembles to the pole;  
 Hither, as to their proper place, arise  
 All various sounds from earth, and seas, and skies,  
 Or spoke aloud, or whisper'd in the ear;  
 Nor ever silence, rest, or peace is here.  
 As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes  
 The sinking stone at first a circle makes,  
 The trembling surface by the motion stirr'd,  
 Spreads in a second circle, then ■ tbird;

Wide, and more wide, the floating rings advance,  
 Fill all the wat'ry plain, and to the margin dance:  
 Thus ev'ry voice and sound, when first they break,  
 On neighb'ring air a soft impression make;  
 Another ambient circle then they move;  
 That, in its turn, impels the next above;  
 Through undulating air the sounds are sent,  
 And spread o'er all the fluid element.

There various ~~rumor~~ I heard of love and strife,  
Of peace and war, health, sickness, death, and life,  
 Of loss and gain, of famine and of store,  
 Of storms at sea, and travels on the shore,  
 Of prodigies, and portents seen in air,  
 Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing hair,  
 Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,  
 The falls of fav'rites, projects of the great,  
 Of old mismanagements, taxations new;  
 All neither wholly false, nor wholly true.

Above, below, without, within, around,  
 Confus'd, unnumber'd multitudes are found,  
 Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away,  
 Hosts rais'd by fear, and phantoms of a day:  
 Astrologers, that future fates foreshew,  
 Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few;

And priests, and party-zealots, num'rous bands,  
 With home-born lies, or tales from foreign lands;  
 Each talk'd aloud, or in some secret place,  
 And wild impatience star'd in ev'ry face.  
 They flying rumours gather'd as they roll'd,  
 Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told;  
 And all who told it added something new,  
 And all who heard it made enlargements too;  
 In ev'ry ear it spread, on ev'ry tongue it grew.  
 Thus flying east and west, and north and south,  
 News travell'd with increase from mouth to mouth  
 So from a spark, that kindled first by chance,  
 With gath'ring force the quick'ning flames advance;  
 Till to the clouds their curling heads aspire,  
 And tow'rs and temples sink in floods of fire.

When thus ripe lies are to perfection sprung,  
 Full grown, and fit to grace ■ mortal tongue,  
 Through thousand vents, impatient, forth they flow,  
 And rush in millions on the world below:  
 Fame sits aloft, and points them out their course,  
 Their date determines, and prescribes their force;  
 Some to remain, and some to perish soon,  
 Or wane and wax alternate like the moon.

Around, a thousand winged wonders fly,  
 Borne by the trumpet's blast, and scatter'd through  
 the sky.

There, at one passage, oft you might survey  
 A lie and truth contending for the way;  
 And long 'twas doubtful, both so closely pent,  
 Which first should issue through the narrow vent;  
 At last agreed, together out they fly,  
 Inseparable now the truth and lie;  
 The strict companions are for ever join'd,  
~~And this of~~ that unmix'd, no mortal e'er shall find.

While thus I stood, intent to see and hear,  
 One came, methought, and whisper'd in my ear:  
 What could thus high thy rash ambition raise?  
 Art thou, fond youth, a candidate for praise?

'Tis true, said I, not void of hopes I came,  
 For who so fond as youthful bards of fame?  
 But few, alas! the casual blessing boast,  
 So hard to gain, so easy to be lost.

How vain that second life in others' breath,  
 Th' estate which wits inherit after death!  
 Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign,  
 (Unsure the tenure, but how vast the fine!)

The great man's curse, without the gains, endure,  
Be envy'd, wretched, and be flatter'd, poor;  
All luckless wits their enemies profest,  
And all successful, jealous friends at best.  
Nor fame I slight, nor for her favours call;  
She comes unlook'd for, if she comes at all.  
But if the purchase costs so dear a price,  
As soothing folly, or exalting vice;  
Oh! if the muse must flatter lawless sway,  
And follow still where fortune leads the way;  
Or if no basis bear my rising name,  
But the fall'n ruins of another's fame;  
Then teach me, heav'n! to scorn the guilty bays,  
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise;  
Unblemish'd let me live, or die unknown:  
O grant an honest fame, or grant me none!



JANUARY AND MAY,  
^  
OR  
THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

FROM CHAUCER.



## JANUARY AND MAY.

THERE liv'd in Lombardy, as authors write,  
In days of old, a wise and worthy knight;  
Of gentle manners, as of gen'rous race,  
Blest with much sense, more riches, and some grace:  
Yet, led astray by Venus' soft delights,  
He scarce could rule some idle appetites:  
For long ago, let priests say what they could,  
Weak sinful laymen were but flesh and blood.

But in due time, when sixty years were o'er,  
He vow'd to lead this vicious life no more;  
Whether pure holiness inspir'd his mind,  
Or dotage turn'd his brain, is hard to find;  
But his high courage prick'd him forth to wed,  
And try the pleasures of a lawful bed.  
This was his nightly dream, his daily care,  
And to the heav'nly pow'rs his constant pray'r,  
Once, ere he died, to taste the blissful life  
Of a kind husband and a loving wife.

These thoughts he fortify'd with reasons still  
 (For none want reasons to confirm their will).  
 Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,  
 That honest wedlock is a glorious thing:  
 But depth of judgment most in him appears,  
 Who wisely weds in his maturer years.  
 Then let him choose a damsel young and fair,  
 To bless his age, and bring a worthy heir;  
 To o~~o~~ his cares, and, free from noise and strife,  
 him gently to the verge of life.  
 Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,  
 Full well they merit all they feel, and more:  
 Unaw'd by precepts, human or divine,  
 Like birds and beasts, promiscuously they join;  
 Nor know to make the present blessing last,  
 To hope the future, or esteem the past:  
 But vainly boast the joys they never try'd,  
 And find divulg'd the secrets they would hide.  
 The marry'd man may bear his yoke with ease,  
 Secure at once himself and heav'n to please;  
 And pass his inoffensive hours away,  
 In bliss all night, and innocence all day:  
 Tho' fortune change, his constant spouse remains,  
 Augments his joys, or mitigates his pains.

But what so pure which envious tongues will  
spare?

Some wicked wits have libell'd all the fair.  
With matchless impudence they style a wife  
The dear-bought curse, and lawful plague of life;  
A bosom serpent, a domestic evil,  
A night-invasion, and a mid-day devil.  
Let not the wise these sland'rous words regard,  
But curse the bones of ev'ry lying bard.  
All other goods by fortune's hand are giv'n,  
A wife is the peculiar gift of heav'n.  
Vain fortune's favours, never at a stay,  
Like empty shadows, pass, and glide away;  
One solid comfort, our eternal wife,  
Abundantly supplies us all our life:  
This blessing lasts (if those who try say true)  
. As long as heart can wish—and longer too.

Our grandsire Adam, er'e of Eve possest,  
Alone, and e'en in paradise unblest,  
With mournful looks the blissful scenes survey'd,  
And wander'd in the solitary shade.  
The Maker saw, took pity, and bestow'd  
Woman, the last, and best reserv'd of God.

A wife! ah gentle deities! can he  
 That has a wife e'er feel adversity?  
 Would men but follow what the sex advise,  
 All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.  
 'Twas by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won  
 His father's blessing from an elder son:  
 Abusive Nabal ow'd his forfeit life  
 To the wise conduct of a prudent wife:  
 Heroic Judith, ■ old Hebrews show,  
 Preserv'd the Jews, and slew th' Assyrian foe:  
 At Hester's suit the persecuting sword  
 Was sheath'd, and Israel liy'd to bless the Lord.

These weighty motives January the sage  
 Maturely ponder'd in his riper age;  
 And charm'd with virtuous joys, and sober life,  
 Would try that christian comfort, call'd a wife.  
 His friends were summon'd on a point so nice  
 To pass their judgment, and to give advice;  
 But fix'd before, and well resolv'd was he  
 (As men that ask advice are wont to be).

' My friends,' he cry'd (and cast ■ mournful look  
 Around the room, and sigh'd before he spoke),  
 Beneath the weight of threescore years I bend,  
 And, worn with cares, am hast'ning to my end;

How I have liv'd, alas! you know too well,  
 In worldly follies which I blush to tell;  
 But gracious heav'n has op'd my eyes at last,  
 With due regret I view my vices past,  
 And, as the precept of the church decrees,  
 Will take a wife, and live in holy ease:  
 But since by counsel all things should be done,  
 And many heads are wiser still than one;  
 Choose you for me, who best shall be content  
 When my desire's approv'd by your consent.

One caution yet is needful to be told  
 To guide your choice; this wife must not be old:  
 There goes a saying, and 'twas shrewdly said,  
 Old fish at table, but young flesh in bed.  
 My soul abhors the tasteless dry embrace  
 Of a stale virgin with a winter face:  
 In that cold season love but treats his guest  
 With bean-straw, and tough forage at the best.  
 No crafty widows shall approach my bed;  
 Those are too wise for bachelors to wed.  
 As subtle clerks by many schools are made,  
 Twice marry'd dames are mistresses o' th' trade:  
 But young and tender virgins, rul'd with ease,  
 We form like wax, and mould them as we please.

' Conceive me, sirs, nor take my sense amiss;  
 'Tis what concerns my soul's eternal bliss;  
 Since if I found no pleasure in my spouse,  
 As flesh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?  
 Then should I live in lewd adultery,  
 And sink downright to Satan when I die:  
 Or were I curs'd with an unfruitful bed,  
 The righteous end were lost for which I wed;  
 To raise up seed to bless the pow'rs above,  
 And not for pleasure only, or for love.  
 Think not I dote; 'tis time to take a wife,  
 When vig'rous blood forbids a chaster life:  
 Those that are blest with store of grace divine,  
 May live like saints by heav'n's consent and mine.

' And since I speak of wedlock, let me say,  
 (As, thank my stars, in modest truth I may)  
 My limbs are active, still I'm sound at heart,  
 And a new vigour springs in ev'ry part.  
 Think not my virtue lost, though time has shed  
 These rev'rend honours on my hoary head:  
 Thus trees are crown'd with blossoms white as snow,  
 The vital sap then rising from below.  
 Old as I am, my lusty limbs appear  
 Like winter greens, that flourish all the year.

Now, sirs, ye know to what I stand inclin'd,  
Let ev'ry friend with freedom speak his mind.'

• He said; the rest in 'diff'rent parts divide;  
The knotty point was urg'd on either side:  
Marriage, the theme on which they all declaim'd,  
Some prais'd with wit, and some with reason blam'd.  
Till, what with proofs, objections, and replies,  
Each wondrous positive, and wondrous wise,  
There fell between his brothers a debate:  
Placebo this was call'd, and Justin that.

First to the knight Placebo thus begun,  
(Mild were his looks, and pleasing was his tone)  
• Such prudence, sir, in all your words appears,  
As plainly proves experience dwells with years!  
Yet you pursue sage Solomon's advice,  
To work by counsel when affairs are nice:  
But, with the wise man's leave, I must protest,  
So may my soul arrive at ease and rest,  
As still I hold your own advice the best.

• Sir, I have liv'd a courtier all my days,  
And study'd men, their manners, and their ways;  
And have observ'd this useful maxim still,  
To let my betters always have their will.

Nay, if my lord affirm'd that black was white,  
 My word was this, "Your honour's in the right."  
 Th' assuming wit, who deems himself so wise  
 As his mistaken patron to advise,  
 Let him not dare to vent his dang'rous thought;  
 A noble fool was never in a fault.  
 This, sir, affects not you, whose ev'ry word  
 Is weigh'd with judgment, and befits a lord:  
 Your will is mine; and i (I will maintain)  
 Pleasing to God, and should be so to man;  
 At least, your courage all the world must praise;  
 Who dare to wed in your declining days.  
 Indulge the vigour of your mounting blood,  
 And let gray fools be indolently good,  
 Who, past all pleasure, damn the joys of sense,  
 With rev'rend dulness and grave impotence.

Justin, who silent sate, and heard the man,  
 Thus, with a philosophic frown, began:

" A heathen author, of the first degree,  
 (Who, though not faith, had sense as well as we)  
 Bids us be certain our concerns to trust  
 To those of gen'rous principles and just.  
 The venture's greater, I'll presume to say,  
 To give your person, than your goods away:

And therefore, sir, as you regard your rest,  
 First learn your lady's qualities at least:  
 Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,  
 Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil;  
 Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,  
 Or such a wit — no man e'er can rule.  
 'Tis true, perfection none must hope to find  
 In all this world, much less in womankind;  
 But if her virtues prove the larger share,  
 Bless the kind fates, and think your fortune rare.  
 Ah, gentle sir, take warning of a friend,  
 Who knows too well the state you thus commend;  
 And spite of all his praises must declare,  
 All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.  
 Heav'n knows I shed full many a private tear,  
 And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear;  
 While all my friends applaud my blissful life,  
 And swear no mortal's happier in a wife;  
 Demure and chaste as any vestal nun,  
 The meekest creature that beholds the sun!  
 But, by th' immortal pow'rs, I feel the pain,  
 And he that smarts has reason to complain.  
 Do what you list, for me; you must be sage,  
 And cautious sure; for wisdom is in age:

But at these years to venture on the fair!  
 By him who made the ocean, earth, and air,  
 To please ■ wife, when her occasions call,  
 Would busy the most vig'rous of us all.  
 And trust me, sir, the chasteſt you can choose  
 Will ask obſervance, and exact her dues.  
 If what I ſpeak my noble lord offend,  
 My tedious ſermon here is at an end.'

‘ ‘Tis well, ‘tis wondrous well,’ the knight replies,  
 ‘ Most worthy kinsman, faith you’re mighty wiſe!  
 We, ſirs, are fools; and muſt resign the cauſe  
 To heath’niſh authors, proverbs, and old ſaws.’  
 He ſpoke with ſcorn, and turn’d another way:—  
 ‘ What does my friend, my dear Placebo, ſay?’  
 ‘ I ſay,’ quoth he, ‘ by heav’n the man’s to blame,  
 To ſlander wives, and wedlock’s holy name.’

At this the council roſe, without delay;  
 Each, in his own opinien, went his way;  
 With full conſent, that, all diſputes appeas’d,  
 The knight ſhould marry, when and where he pleas’d.

Who now but January exults with joy?  
 The charms of wedlock all his ſoul employ:  
 Each nymph by turns his wav’ring mind posſeſt,  
 And reign’d the ſhort-liv’d tyrant of his breast;

Whilst fancy pictur'd ev'ry lively part,  
 And each bright image wander'd o'er his heart.  
 Thus, in some public forum fix'd on high,  
 A mirror shows the figures moving by;  
 Still one by one, in swift succession, pass  
 The gliding shadows o'er the polish'd glass.  
 This lady's charms the nicest could not blaine,  
 But vile suspicions had aspers'd her fame;  
 That was with sense, but not with virtue blest;  
 And one had grace, that wanted all the rest.  
 Thus doubting long what nymph he should obey,  
 He fix'd at last upon the youthful May.  
 Her faults he knew not, love is always blind,  
 But ev'ry charm revolv'd within his mind:  
 Her tender age, her form divinely fair,  
 Her easy motion, her attractive air,  
 Her sweet behaviour, her enchanting face,  
 Her moving softness, and majestic grace.

Much in his prudence did our knight rejoice,  
 And thought no mortal could dispute his choice:  
 Once more in haste he summon'd ev'ry friend,  
 And told them all their pains were at an end.  
 ' Heav'n, that (said he) inspir'd me first to wed,  
 Provides a consort worthy of my bed:

Let none oppose th' election, since on this  
Depends my quiet, and my future bliss.

‘ A dame there is, the darling of my eyes, ‘  
Young, beauteous, artless, innocent, and wise ;  
Chaste, tho' not rich ; and, though not nobly born,  
Of honest parents, and may serve my turn.  
Her will I wed, if gracious heav'n so please,  
To pass my age in sanctity and ease ;  
And thank the pow'rs, I may possess alone  
The lovely prize, and share my bliss with none !  
If you, my friends, this virgin can procure,  
My joys are full, my happiness is sure.

‘ One only doubt remains : full oft, I've heard,  
By casuists grave, and deep divines averr'd,  
That 'tis too much for human race to know  
The bliss of heav'n above, and earth below :  
Now should the nuptial pleasures prove so great,  
To match the blessings of the future state,  
Those endless joys were ill exchang'd for these ;  
Then clear this doubt, and set my mind at ease.’

This Justin heard, nor could his spleen control,  
Touch'd to the quick, and tickled at the soul.  
‘ Sir knight,’ he cry'd, ‘ if this be all you dread,  
Heav'n put it past your doubt whene'er you wed ;

And to my fervent pray'rs so far consent,  
 That, ere the rites are o'er, you may repent!  
 Good heav'n, no doubt, the nuptial state approves,  
 Since it chastises still what best it loves.  
 Then be not, sir, abandon'd to despair;  
 Seek, and perhaps you'll find among the fair,  
 One, that may do your bus'ness to a hair;  
 Not e'en in wish your happiness delay,  
 But prove the scourge to lash you on your way:  
 Then to the skies your mounting soul shall go,  
 Swift as an arrow soaring from the bow!  
 Provided still, you moderate your joy,  
 Nor in your pleasures all your might employ,  
 Let reason's rule your strong desires abate,  
 Nor please too lavishly your gentle mate.  
 Old wives there are, of judgment most acute,  
 Who solve these questions beyond all dispute;  
 Consult with those, and be of better cheer;  
 Marry, do penance, and dismiss your fear.'

So said, they rose, nor more the work delay'd;  
 The match was offer'd, the proposals made.  
 The parents, you may think, would soon comply;  
 The old have int'rest ever in their eye.

Nor was it hard to move the lady's mind;  
When fortune favours, still the fair are kind.

I pass each previous settlement and deed,  
Too long for me to write, or you to read;  
Nor will with quaint impertinence display  
The pomp, the pageantry, the proud array.  
The time approach'd; to church the parties went,  
At once with carnal and devout intent:  
Forth came the priest, and bade th' obedient wife  
Like Sarah or Rebecca lead her life;  
Then pray'd the pow'rs the fruitful bed to bless,  
And made all sure enough with holiness.

And now the palace-gates are open'd wide,  
The guests appear in order, side by side,  
And, plac'd in state, the bridegroom and the bride.  
The breathing flute's soft notes are heard around,  
And the shrill trumpets mix their silver sound;  
The vaulted roofs with echoing music ring,  
These touch the vocal stops, and those the trem-  
bling string.

Not thus Amphion tun'd the warbling lyre,  
Nor Joab the sounding clarion could inspire,  
Nor fierce Theodosius, whose sprightly strain  
Could swell the soul to rage, and fire the martial train.

Bacchus himself, the nuptial feast to grace,  
 (So poets sing) was present ~~in~~ the place:  
 And lovely Venus, goddess of delight,  
 Shook high her flaming torch in open sight,  
 And danc'd around, and smil'd on ev'ry knight:  
 Pleas'd her best servant ~~would~~ his courage try,  
 No less in wedlock, than in liberty.  
 Full many an age old hymen had not spy'd  
 So kind a bridegroom, or so bright a bride.  
 Ye bards! renown'd among the tuneful throng  
 For gentle lays, and joyous nuptial song,  
 Think not your softest numbers can display  
 The matchless glories of this blissful day;  
 The joys are such as far transcend your rage,  
 When tender youth has wedded stooping age.

The beauteous dame sat smiling at the board,  
 And darted am'rous glances at her lord.  
 Not Hester's self, whose charms the Hebrews sing,  
 E'er look'd so lovely on her Persian king:  
 Bright as the rising sun, in summer's day,  
 And fresh and blooming as the month of May  
 The joyful knight survey'd her by his side,  
 Nor envy'd Paris with the Spartan bride:

Still as his mind revolv'd with vast delight  
 Th' entrancing raptures of th' approaching night,  
 Restless he sat, invoking ev'ry pow'r  
 To speed his bliss, and haste the happy hōur.  
 Meantime the vig'rous dancers beat the ground,  
 And songs were sung, and flowing bowls went round.  
 With od'rous spices they perfum'd the place,  
 And mirth and pleasure shone in ev'ry face.

Damian alone, of all the menial train,  
 Sad in the midst of triumphs, sigh'd for pain;  
 Damian alone, the knight's obsequious squire,  
 Consum'd at heart, and fed a secret fire.  
 His lovely mistress all his soul possest,  
 He look'd, he languish'd, and could take no rest:  
 His task perform'd, he sadly went his way,  
 Fell on his bed, and loath'd the light of day.  
 There let him lie; till his relenting dame  
 Weep in her turn, and waste in equal flame.

The weary sun, as learned poets write,  
 Forsook th' horizon, and roll'd down the light;  
 While glitt'ring stars his absent beams supply,  
 And night's dark mantle overspread the sky.  
 Then rose the guests, and as the time requir'd,  
 Each paid his thanks, and decently retir'd.

The foe once gone, our knight prepar'd t' undress,  
 So keen he was, and eager to possess;  
 But first thought fit th' assistance to receive,  
 Which grave physicians scruple not to give:  
 Satyrion near, with hot eringoes stood,  
 Cantharides, to fire the lazy blood,  
 Whose pse old bards describe in luscious rhymes,  
 And critics learn'd explain to modern times.

By this the sheets were spread, the bride undress'd,  
 The room was sprinkled, and the bed was bless'd.  
 What next ensu'd beseems not me to say;  
 'Tis sung, he labour'd till the dawning day,  
 Then briskly sprung from bed, with heart so light,  
 As all were nothing he had done by night,  
 And sipp'd his cordial as he sat upright.  
 He kiss'd his balmy spouse with wanton play,  
 And feebly sung a lusty roundelay:  
 Then on the couch his weary limbs he cast;  
 For ev'ry labour must have rest at last.

But anxious cares the pensive squire oppress,  
 Sleep fled his eyes, and peace forsook his breast;  
 The raging flames that in his bosom dwell,  
 He wanted art to hide, and means to tell:

Yet hoping time th' occasion might betray,  
 Compos'd a sonnet to the lovely May;  
 Which, writ and folded with the nicest art,  
 He wrapt in silk, and laid upon his heart.

When now the fourth revolving day was run,  
 ('Twas June, and Cancer had receiv'd the sun)  
 Forth from her chamber came the beauteous bride,  
 The good old knight mov'd slowly by her side.  
 High —— was sung; they feasted in the hall;  
 The servants round stood ready at their call.  
 The squire alone was absent from the board,  
 And much his sickness griev'd his worthy lord,  
 Who pray'd his spouse, attended with her train,  
 To visit Damian, and divert his pain.  
 Th' obliging dames obey'd with one consent;  
 They left the hall, and to his lodging went.  
 The female tribe surround him — he lay,  
 And close beside him sat the gentle May:  
 Where, — she try'd his pulse, he softly drew  
 A heaving sigh, and cast — mournful view!  
 Then gave his bill, and brib'd the pow'rs divine,  
 With secret vows, to favour his design.

Who studies now but discontented May?  
 On her soft couch uneasily she lay:

The lumpish husband snor'd away the night,  
 Till coughs awak'd him near the morning light.  
 What then he did, I'll not presume to tell,  
 Nor if she thought herself in heav'n or hell;  
 Honest and dull in nuptial bed they lay,  
 Till the bell toll'd, and all arose to pray.

Were it by forceful destiny decreed,  
 Or did from chance, or nature's pow'r proceed;  
 Or that some star, with aspect kind to love,  
 Shed its selectest influence from above;  
 Whatever was the cause, the tender dame  
 Felt the first motions of an infant flame;  
 Receiv'd th' impressions of the love-sick squire,  
 And wasted in the soft infectious fire.

Ye fair, draw near, let May's example move  
 Your gentle minds to pity those who love!  
 Had some fierce tyrant in her stead been found,  
 The poor adorer sure had hang'd, or drown'd;  
 But she, your sex's mirror, free from pride,  
 Was much too meek to prove a homicide.

But to my tale: Some sages have defin'd  
 Pleasure the sov'reign bliss of humankind:  
 Our knight (who studied much, we may suppose)  
 Deriv'd his high philosophy from those;

For, like a prince, he bore the vast expence  
 Of lavish pomp, and proud magnificence:  
 His house was stately, his retinue gay,  
 Large was his train, and gorgeous his array.  
 His spacious garden made to yield to none,  
 Was compass'd round with walls of solid stone;  
 Priapus could not half describe the grace  
 (Though god of gardens) of this charming place:  
 A place to tire the rambling wits of France  
 In long descriptions, and exceed romance:  
 Enough to shame the gentlest bard that sings  
 Of painted meadows, and of purling springs.

Full in the centre of the flow'ry ground  
 A crystal fountain spread its streams around,  
 The fruitful banks with verdant laurels crown'd:  
 About this spring (if ancient fame say true)  
 The dapper elves their moon-light sports pursue:  
 Their pigmy king, and little fairy queen,  
 In circling dances gambol'd on the green,  
 While tuneful sprites a merry concert made,  
 And airy music warbled through the shade.

Hither the noble knight would oft repair  
 (His scene of pleasure, and peculiar care);

For this he held it dear, and always bore  
 The silver key that lock'd the garden-door.  
 To this sweet place in summer's sultry heat,  
 He us'd from noise and bus'ness to retreat;  
 And here in dalliance spend the live-long day,  
*Solus cum sola*, with his sprightly May.  
 For whate'er work was undischarg'd a-bed,  
 The duteous knight in this fair garden sped.

But ah! what mortal lives of bliss secure?  
 How short a space our worldly joys endure!  
 O fortune, fair, like all thy treach'rous kind,  
 But faithless still, and wav'ring as the wind!  
 O painted monster, form'd mankind to cheat,  
 With pleasing poison, and with soft deceit!  
 This rich, this am'rous, venerable knight,  
 Amidst his ease, his solace, and delight,  
 Struck blind by thee, resigns his days to grief,  
 And calls on death, the wretch's last relief.

The rage of jealousy then seiz'd his mind,  
 For much he fear'd the faith of womankind.  
 His wife not suffer'd from his side to stray,  
 Was captive kept, he watch'd her night and day,

Full oft in tears did hapless May complain,  
 And sigh'd full oft; but sigh'd and wept in vain:  
 She look'd on Damian with a lover's eye;  
 For oh, 'twas fix'd; she must possess or die!  
 Nor less impatience vex'd her am'rous squire,  
 Wild with delay, and burning with desire.  
 Watch'd as she was, yet could he not refrain  
 By secret writing to disclose his pain;  
 The dame by signs reveal'd her kind intent,  
 Till both were conscious what each other meant.

Ah! gentle knight, what would thy eyes avail,  
 Though they could see as far as ships can sail?  
 'Tis better, sure, when blind, deceiv'd to be,  
 Than be deluded when a man can see!

Argus himself, so cautious and so wise,  
 Was over-watch'd, for all his hundred eyes:  
 So many an honest husband may, 'tis known,  
 Who, wisely, never thinks the case his own.

The dame at last, by diligence and care,  
 Procur'd the key her knight was wont to bear;  
 She took the wards in wax before the fire,  
 And gave th' impression to the trusty squire.  
 By means of this some wonder shall appear,  
 Which, in due place and season, you may hear.

Well sung sweet Ovid, in the days of yore,  
 What flight is that which love will not explore?  
 And Pyramus and Thisbe plainly show  
 The feats true lovers, when they list, can do:  
 Though watch'd and captive, yet in spite of all,  
 They found the art of kissing through a wall.

But now no longer from our tale to stray,  
 It happ'd, that once upon a summer's day,  
 Our rev'rend knight was urg'd to am'rous play:  
 He rais'd his spouse ere matin-bell was rung,  
 And thus his morning canticle he sung.

' Awake, my love, disclose thy radiant eyes;  
 Arise, my wife, my beauteous lady, rise!  
 Hear how the doves with pensive notes complain,  
 And in soft murmurs tell the trees their pain:  
 The winter's past; the clouds and tempests fly;  
 The sun adorns the fields, and brightens all the sky.  
 Fair without spot, whose ev'ry charming part  
 My bosom wounds, and captivates my heart;  
 Come, and in mutual pleasures let's engage,  
 Joy of my life, and comfort of my age.'

This heard, to Damian straight a sign she made  
 To haste before; the gentle squire obey'd:

Secret and undeserv'd he took his way,  
And ambush'd close behind an arbour lay.

It was not long ere January came,  
And hand in hand with him his lovely dame;  
Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure,  
He turn'd the key, and made the gate secure.

'Here let us walk,' he said, 'observ'd by none,  
Conscious of pleasures to the world unknown:  
So may my soul have joy, as thou my wife  
Art far the dearest solace of my life;  
And rather would I choose, by heav'n above,  
To die this instant, than to lose thy love.  
Reflect what truth was in my passion shown,  
When, unendow'd, I took thee for my own,  
And sought no treasure but thy heart alone.  
Old as I am, and now depriv'd of sight,  
Whilst thou art faithful to thy own true knight,  
Nor age, nor blindness, rob me of delight.  
Each other loss with patience I ■■■ bear,  
The loss of thee is what I only fear.

Consider then, my lady and my wife,  
The solid comforts of ■ virtuous life.  
As first, the love of Christ himself you gain;  
Next, your own honour undefil'd maintain;

And, lastly, that which sure your mind must move,  
 My whole estate shall gratify your love:  
 Make your own terms, and ere to-morrow's sun  
 Displays his light, by heav'n it shall be done.  
 I seal the contract with a holy kiss,  
 And will perform, by this—my dear, and this—  
 Have comfort, spouse, nor think thy lord unkind;  
 'Tis love, not jealousy, that fires my mind:  
 For when thy charms my sober thoughts engage,  
 And join'd to them my own unequal age,  
 From thy dear side I have no pow'r to part,  
 Such secret transports warm my melting heart.  
 For who that once possess'd those heav'nly charms,  
 Could live one moment absent from thy arms?"

He ceas'd, and May with modest grace reply'd;  
 (Weak was her voice, as while she spoke she cry'd)  
 "Heav'n knows (with that a tender sigh she drew)  
 I have a soul to save no well no you;  
 And, what no less you to my charge commend,  
 My dearest honour, will to death defend.  
 To you in holy church I gave my hand,  
 And join'd my heart in wedlock's sacred band:  
 Yet after this, if you distrust my care,  
 Then hear, my lord, and witness what I swear:

' First may the yawning earth her bosom rend,  
 And let me hence to hell alive descend;  
 Or die the death I dread no less than hell,  
Sew'd in a sack, and plung'd into a well;  
 Ere I my fame by one lewd act disgrace,  
 Or once renounce the honour of my race.  
 For know, sir knight, of gentle blood I came;  
 I loath a whore, and startle at the name.  
 But jealous men on their own crimes reflect,  
 And learn from thence their ladies to suspect:  
 Else why these needless cautions, sir, to me?  
 These doubts and fears of female constancy?  
 This chime still rings in ev'ry lady's ear,  
 The only strain a wife must hope to hear.'

Thus while she spoke a sidelong glance she cast,  
 Where Damian kneeling worshipp'd as she past.  
 She saw him watch the motions of her eye,  
 And singled out a pear-tree planted nigh:  
 'Twas charg'd with fruit that made a goodly show,  
 And hung with dangling pears was ev'ry bough.  
 Thither th' obsequious squire address'd his pace,  
 And climbing, in the summit took his place;  
 The knight and lady walk'd beneath in view,  
 Where let us leave them, and our tale pursue.

'Twas now the season when the glorious sun  
 His heav'nly progress through the Twins had run;  
 And Jove, exalted, his mild influence yields,  
 To glad the glebe, and paint the flow'ry fields;  
 Clear was the day, and Phœbus, rising bright,  
 Had streak'd the azure firmament with light;  
 He pierc'd the glitt'ring clouds with golden streams,  
 And warm'd the womb of earth with genial beams.

It so befel, in that fair morning-tide,  
 The fairies sported on the garden-side,  
 And in the midst their monarch and his bride.  
 So feately tripp'd the light-foot ladies round,  
 The knights so nimbly o'er the greensword bound,  
 That scarce they bent the flow'rs, or touch'd the  
 ground.

The dances ended, all the fairy train  
 For pinks and daisies search'd the flow'ry plain;  
 While on a bank reclin'd of rising green,  
 Thus, with a frown, the king bespoke his queen.

‘ ‘Tis too apparent, argue what you can,  
 The treachery you women use to man:  
 A thousand authors have this truth made out,  
 And sad experience leaves no room for doubt.

' Heav'n rest thy spirit, noble Solomon,  
 A wiser monarch never saw the sun:  
 All wealth, all honours, the supreme degree  
Of earthly bliss, was well bestow'd on thee!  
 For sagely hast thou said, of all mankind,  
 One only just, and righteous, hope to find:  
 But shouldst thou search the spacious world around,  
 Yet one good woman is not to be found.

' Thus says the king who knew your wicked-  
 ness;  
 The son of Sirach testifies no less.  
 So may some wildfire on your bodies fall,  
 Or some devouring plague consume you all;  
 As well you view the lecher in the tree,  
 And well this honourable knight you see:  
 But since he's blind and old (a helpless case)  
 His squire shall cuckold him before your face.

' Now by my own dread majesty I swear,  
 And by this awful sceptre which I bear,  
 No impious wretch shall 'scape unpunish'd long,  
 That in my presence offers such ■ wrong.  
 I will this instant undeceive the knight,  
 And in the very act restore his sight:

And set the strumpet here in open view,  
 A warning to these ladies, and to you,  
 And all the faithless sex, for ever to be true.'

' And will you so,' replied the queen, ' indeed?  
 Now, by my mother's soul, it is decreed,  
 She shall not want an answer at her need.  
 For her, and for her daughters, I'll engage,  
 And all the sex in each succeeding age;  
 Art shall be theirs to varnish an offence,  
 And fortify their crimes with confidence.  
 Nay, were they taken in a strict embrace,  
 Seen with both eyes, and pinion'd on the place;  
 All they shall need is to protest and swear,  
 Breathe a soft sigh, and drop a tender tear;  
 Till their wise husbands, gull'd by arts like these,  
 Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as geese.

' What tho' this stand'rous Jew, this Solomon,  
 Call'd women fools, and knew full many a one;  
 The wiser wits of later times declare  
 How constant, chaste, and virtuous, women are:  
 Witness the martyrs, who resign'd their breath,  
 Serene in torments, unconcern'd in death;  
 And witness next what Roman authors tell,  
 How Arria, Porcia, and Lucretia fell.

' But since the sacred leaves to all are free,  
 And men interpret texts, why should not we?  
 By this no more — meant, than to have shown,  
That sov'reign goodness dwells in him alone,  
 Who only Is, and is but only One.  
 But grant the worst; shall women then be weigh'd  
 By ev'ry word that Solomon hath said?  
 What though this king (as ancient story boasts)  
 Built a fair temple to the Lord of Hosts;  
 He ceas'd at last his Maker to adore,  
 And did as much for idol gods, or more.  
 Beware what lavish praises you confer  
 On a rank lecher and idolater;  
 Whose reign indulgent God, says holy writ,  
 Did but for David's righteous sake permit;  
 David, the monarch after heav'n's own mind,  
 Who lov'd our sex, and honour'd all our kind.

' Well, I'm a woman, and as such must speak;  
 Silence would swell me, and my heart would break.  
 Know then, I scorn your dull authorities,  
 Your idle wits, and all their learned lies:  
 By heav'n, those authors are our sex's foes,  
 Whom, in our right, I must and will oppose.'

▪ Nay (quoth the king), dear madam, be not wroth:

I yield it up; but since I gave my oath,  
That this much-injur'd knight again should see,  
It must be done—I ■■■ a king,' said he,  
‘ And one whose faith has ever sacred been—’

‘ And so has mine (she said)—I am a queen:  
Her answer she shall have, I undertake;  
And thus an end of all dispute I make.  
Try when you list; and you shall find, my lord,  
It is not in our sex to break our word.’

We leave them here in this heroic strain,  
And to the knight our story turns again;  
Who in the garden, with his lovely May,  
Sung merrier than the cuckoo or the jay:  
This was his song, ‘ O kind and constant be,  
Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee.’

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew  
By easy steps to where the pear-tree grew:  
The longing dame look'd up, and spy'd her love  
Full fairly perch'd among the boughs above.  
She stopp'd, and sighing, ‘ O good gods!’ she cry'd,  
▪ What pangs, what sudden shoots distend my side!

O for that tempting fruit, so fresh, so green;  
 Help, for the love of heav'n's immortal queen!  
 Help, dearest lord, and save at once the life  
 Of thy poor infant, and thy longing wife!

Sore sigh'd the knight to hear his lady's cry,  
 But could not climb, and had no servant nigh:  
 Old as he was, and void of eye-sight too,  
 What could, alas! a helpless husband do?

'And must I languish then (she said), and die,  
 Yet view the lovely fruit before my eye?  
 At least, kind sir, for charity's sweet sake,  
 Vouchsafe the trunk between your arms to take;  
 Then from your back I might ascend the tree;  
 Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to me.'

'With all my soul,' he thus reply'd again,  
 'I'd spend my dearest blood to ease thy pain.'  
 With that his back against the trunk he bent;  
 She seiz'd a twig, and up the tree she went.

Now prove your patience, gentle ladies all!  
 Nor let on ■■■ your heavy anger fall:  
 'Tis truth I tell, though not in phrase refin'd;  
 Though blunt my tale, yet honest is my mind.  
 What feats the lady in the tree might do,  
 I pass, ■■■ gambols never known to you;

But sure it was a merrier fit, she swore,  
Than in her life she ever felt before.

In that nice moment, lo! the wond'ring knight  
Look'd out, and stood restor'd to sudden sight.  
Straight on the tree his eager eycs he bent,  
As one whose thoughts were on his spouse intent;  
But when he saw his bosom-wife so dress'd,  
His rage was such as cannot be express'd.  
Not frantic mothers when their infants die,  
With louder clamours rend the vaulted sky:  
He cry'd, he roar'd, he storm'd, he tore his hair;  
'Death! hell! and furies! what dost thou do there?'

'What ails my lord?' the trembling dame reply'd,  
I thought your patience had been better try'd:  
Is this your love, ungrateful and unkind,  
This my reward for having cur'd the blind?  
Why was I taught to make my husband see,  
By struggling with a man upon a tree?  
Did I for this the pow'r of magic prove?  
Unhappy wife, whose crime was too much love!'

'If this be struggling, by this holy light,  
'Tis struggling with a vengeance (quoth the knight);  
So heav'n preserve the sight it has restor'd,  
As with these eyes I plainly saw thee whor'd;

Whor'd by my slave—perfidious wretch! may hell  
As surely seize thee, as I saw too well.'

‘Guard me, good angels!’ cried the gentle May,  
‘Pray heav’n this magic work the proper way!  
Alas, my love! ’tis certain, could you see,  
You ne’er had us’d these killing words to me:  
So help me, fates! as ’tis no perfect sight,  
But some faint glimm’ring of a doubtful light.’

‘What I have said (quoth he) I must maintain,  
For by th’ immortal pow’rs it *seem’d* too plain—’

‘By all those pow’rs, some frenzy seiz’d your  
mind

(Reply’d the dame), are these the thanks I find,  
Wretch that I am, that e’er I was so kind?  
She said; a rising sigh express’d her woe,  
The ready tears apace began to flow,  
And as they fell she wip’d from either eye  
The drops (for women, ‘when they list, can cry).

The knight was touch’d; and in his looks appear’d

Signs of reinorse, while thus his spouse he cheer’d:  
‘Madam, ’tis past, and my short anger o’er!  
Come down, and vex your tender heart no more:

Excuse me, dear, if aught amiss was said,  
 For, on my soul, amends shall soon be made:  
 Let my repentance your forgiveness draw;  
 By heav'n, I swore but what I *thought* I saw.'

' Ah, my lov'd lord ! 'twas much unkind (she cry'd)  
 On bare suspicion thus to treat your bride.  
 But till your sight's establish'd, for a while,  
 Imperfect objects may your sense beguile.  
 Thus, when from sleep we first our eyes display,  
 The balls are wounded with the piercing ray,  
 And dusky vapours rise, and intercept the day:  
 So just recov'ring from the shades of night,  
 Your swimming eyes are drunk with sudden light,  
 Strange phantoms dance around, and skin before  
 your sight.

Then, sir, be cautious, nor too rashly deem;  
 Heav'n knows how seldom things are what they  
 seem !

Consult your reason, and you soon shall find  
 'Twas you were jealous, not your wife unkind:  
 Jove ne'er spoke oracle more true than this,  
 None judge so wrong as those who think amiss.'

With that she leap'd into her lord's embrace,  
 With well-dissembled virtue in her face.

He hugg'd her close, and kiss'd her o'er and o'er,  
Disturb'd with doubts and jealousies no more:  
Both, pleas'd and bless'd, renew'd their mutual vows:  
A fruitful wife, and a believing spouse. •

Thus ends our tale, whose moral next to make:  
Let all wise husbands hence example take;  
And pray, to crown the pleasure of their lives,  
To be so well deluded by their wives.

THE  
Wife of Bath  
HER PROLOGUE.

FROM CHAUCER.



THE  
WIFE OF BATH.

BEHOLD the woes of matrimonial life,  
And hear with rev'rence an experienc'd wife;  
To dear-bought wisdom give the credit due,  
And think for once ■ wiman tells you true.  
In all these trials I have borne a part:  
I was myself the scourge that caus'd the smart;  
For since fifteen in triumph have I led  
Five captive husbands from the church to bed.  
Christ saw a wedding once, the Scripture says,  
And saw but one, 'tis thought, in all his days;  
Whence some infer, whose conscience is too nice,  
No pious Christian ought to marry twice.

But let them read, and solve me if they can,  
The words address'd to the Samaritan;  
Five times in lawful wedlock she was join'd,  
And sure the certain stint was ne'er defin'd.

‘ Increase and multiply’ was heav’n’s command,  
And that’s a text I clearly understand:

This too, " Let men their sires and mothers leave,  
 And to their dearer wives for ever cleave."  
 More wives than one by Solomon were try'd, —  
 Or else the wisest of mankind's bely'd.  
 I've had myself full many a merry fit,  
 And trust in heav'n I may have many yet;  
 For when my transitory spouse, unkind,  
 Shall die and leave his woful wife behind,  
 I'll take the next good Christian I can find.

Paul, knowing one could never serve our turn,  
 Declar'd 'twas better far to wed than burn.  
 There's danger in assembling fire and tow;  
 I grant 'em that; and what it means you know.  
 The same apostle, too, has elsewhere own'd  
 No precept for virginity he found:  
 'Tis but a counsel—and we women still  
 Take which we like, the counsel or our will.

I envy not their bliss, if he or she  
 Think fit to live in perfect chastity:  
 Pure let them be, and free from taint of vice;  
 I for a few slight spots am not so nice.  
 Heav'n calls us diff'rent ways, on these bestows  
 One proper gift, another grants to those:

Not ev'ry man's oblig'd to sell his store,  
 And give up all his substance to the poor:  
 Such as are perfect may, I can't deny;  
 But by your leaves, divines! so am not I.

Full many a saint, since first the world began,  
 Liv'd an unspotted maid in spite of man:  
 Let such (a God's name) with fine wheat be fed,  
 And let us honest wives eat barley-bread.  
 For me, I'll keep the post assign'd by heav'n,  
 And use the copious talent it has giv'n:  
 Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,  
 And keep an equal reck'ning ev'ry night;  
 His proper body is not his, but mine;  
 For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine.

Know then, of those five husbands I have had,  
 Three were just tolerable, two were bad.  
 The three were old, but rich, and fond beside,  
 And toil'd most piteously to please their bride;  
 But since their wealth (the best they had) was mine,  
 The rest without much loss I could resign:  
 Sure to be lov'd I took no pains to please,  
 Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with show'rs of gold  
 They made their court, like Jupiter of old;

If I but smil'd, ■ sudden youth they found,  
And a new palsy seiz'd them when I frown'd.

Ye sov'reign wives! give ear, and understand:  
Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command;  
For never was it giv'n to mortal ■  
To lie so boldly as we women can:  
Forswear the fact, though seen with both his eyes,  
And call your maids to witness how he lies.

Hark, old sir Paul! ('twas thus I us'd to say)  
Whence is our neighbour's wife so rich and gay?  
Treated, caress'd, where'er she's pleas'd to roain—  
I sit in tatters, and immur'd at home.  
Why to her house dost thou so oft repair?  
Art thou so am'rous? and is she so fair?  
If I but see ■ cousin or a friend,  
Lord! how you swell and rage like any fiend!  
But you reel home, ■ drunken beastly bear,  
Then preach till midnight in your easy chair;  
Cry wives are false, and ev'ry woman evil,  
And give up all that's female to the devil.

If poor (you say), she drains her husband's purse;  
If rich, she keeps her priest, ■ something worse;  
If highly born, intolerably vain,  
Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain;

Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic,  
 Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick:  
 If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,  
 By pressing youth attack'd ■ ev'ry side;  
 If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,  
 Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures,  
 Or else she dances with becoming grace,  
 Or shape excuses the defects of face.  
 There swims no goose so gray but soon or late  
 She finds some honest gander for her mate.

Horses (thou say'st) and asses men may try,  
 And ring suspected vessels ere they buy;  
 But wives, a random choice, untry'd they take,  
 They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake;  
 Then, nor till then, the veil's remov'd away,  
 And all the woman glares in open day.

You tell me, to preserve your wife's good grace,  
 Your eyes must always languish on my face,  
 Your tongue with constant flatt'ries feed my ear,  
 And tag each sentence with ' My life! my dear!'  
 If by strange chance ■ modest blush be rais'd,  
 Be sure my fine complexion must be prais'd.  
 My garments always must be new and gay,  
 And feasts still kept upon my wedding-day.

Then must my nurse be pleas'd, and fav'rite maid;  
 And endless treats and endless visits paid  
 To a long train of kindred, friends, allies:  
 All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

On Jenkin, too, you cast a squinting eye:  
 What! can your 'prentice raise your jealousy?  
 Fresh are his ruddy cheeks, his forehead fair,  
 And like the burnish'd gold his curling hair.  
 But clear thy wrinkled brow, and quit thy sorrow,  
 I'd scorn your 'prentice should you die to-morrow.

Why are thy chests all lock'd? on what design?  
 Are not thy worldly goods and treasure mine?  
 Sir, I'm no fool; nor shall you, by St. John,  
 Have goods and body to yourself alone.  
 One you shall quit, in spite of both your eyes—  
 I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.  
 If you had wit, you'd say, ' Go where you will,  
 Dear spouse! I credit not the tales they tell:  
 Take all the freedoms of a marry'd life;  
 I know thee for a virtuous faithful wife.'

Lord! when you have enough what need you care  
 How merrily soever others fare?  
 Though all the day I give and take delight,  
 Doubt not sufficient will be left at night.

Tis but ■ just and rational desire  
 To light ■ taper at a neighbour's fire.

"There's danger too, you think, in rich array,  
 And none can long be modest that are gay.  
 The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,  
 The chimney keeps, and sits content within;  
 But once grown sleek will from her corner run,  
 Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun:  
 She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad  
 To shew her fur, and to be caterwaul'd.

Lo thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires  
 These three right ancient venerable sires.  
 I told 'em, Thus you say and thus you do;  
 I told 'em false, but Jenkin swore 'twas true.  
 I, like ■ dog, could bite ■ well as whine,  
 And first complain'd whene'er the guilt ■■■ mine.  
 I tax'd them oft with wenching and amours,  
 When their weak legs scarce dragg'd them out of  
 doors;

And swore the rambles that I took by night  
 Were all to spy what damsels they bedight:  
 That colour brought ■■■ many hours of mirth;  
 For all this wit is giv'n ■■■ from our birth.

Heav'n gave to woman the peculiar grace  
To spin, to weep, and cully human race.  
By this nice conduct and this prudent course, ~  
By murmur'ring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,  
I still prevail'd, and would be in the right,  
Or curtain-lectures made a restless night.  
If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,  
What! so familiar with your spouse? I cry'd:  
I levy'd first a tax upon his need;  
Then let him—'twas a nicety indeed!  
Let all mankind this certain maxim hold,  
Marry who will, our sex is to be sold.  
With empty hands no tassels you can lure,  
But fulsome love for gain we can endure;  
For gold we love the impotent and old,  
And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling, for gold.  
Yet with embraces curses oft I mixt,  
Then kiss'd again, and chid, and rail'd betwixt.  
Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,  
For not one word in man's arrears ~~in~~ I.  
To drop a dear dispute I was unable,  
E'en though the Pope himself had sat at table;  
But when my point was gain'd, then thus I spoke:

Approach, my spouse! and let me kiss thy cheek;  
 Thou shouldst be always thus, resign'd and meek.  
 Of Job's great patience since so oft you preach,  
 Well should you practise who so well can teach.  
 'Tis difficult to do, I must allow,  
 But I, my dearest! will instruct you how.  
 Great is the blessing of a prudent wife,  
 Who puts a period to domestic strife.  
 One of us two must rule, and one obey;  
 And since in man right reason bears the sway,  
 Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way.  
 The wives of all my family have rul'd  
 Their tender husbands, and their passions cool'd.  
 Fy! 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan:  
 What! would you have me to yourself alone?  
 Why, take me, love! take all and ev'ry part!  
 Here's your revenge! you love it at your heart.  
 Would I vouchsafe to sell what nature gave,  
 You little think what custom I could have.  
 But see! I'm all your own—nay hold—for shame!  
 What means my dear?—indeed—you are to blame.

Thus with my first three lords I pass'd my life,  
 A very woman and a very wife.

What sums from these old spouses I could raise  
 Procur'd young husbands in my riper days.  
 Though past my bloom, not yet decay'd was I,  
 Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a pie.  
 In country dances still I bore the bell,  
 And sung as sweet as co'ning Philomel.  
 To clear my quail-pipe, and refresh my soul,  
 Full oft I drain'd the spicy nut-brown bowl;  
 Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood improve,  
 And warm the swelling veins to feats of love:  
 For 'tis as sure as cold engenders hail,  
 A liqu'rish mouth must have a lech'rous tail:  
 Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,  
 As all true gamesters by experience know.

But oh, good gods! whene'er I thought I cast  
 On all the joys of youth and beauty past,  
 To find in pleasures I have had my part,  
 Still warms me to the bottom of my heart.  
 This wicked world was once my dear delight;  
 Now all my conquests, all my charms, good night!  
 The flour consum'd, the best that now I can  
 Is e'en to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding true;  
 He kept, 'twas thought, a private miss or two:

But all that score I paid.—As how? you'll say;  
 Not with my body in ■ filthy way;  
 But ■ I dress'd, and danc'd, and drank, and din'd,  
 And view'd a friend with eyes so very kind,  
 As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry,  
 With burning rage and frantic jealousy.  
 His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,  
 For here on earth I was his purgatory.  
 Oft, when his shoe the most severely wrung,  
 He put on careless airs, and sat and sung.  
 How sore I gall'd him only heav'n could know,  
 And he that felt, and I that caus'd the woe.  
 He died when last from pilgrimage I came,  
 With other gossips, from Jerusalem;  
 And now lies bury'd underneath a rood,  
 Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest wood:  
 A tomb, indeed, with fewer sculptures grac'd  
 Than that Mausolus' pious widow plac'd,  
 Or where enshrin'd the great Darius lay;  
 But cost ■ graves is merely thrown away.  
 The pit fill'd up, with turf we cover'd o'er;  
 So bless the good man's soul! I say no more.  
 Now for my fifth lov'd lord, the last and best;  
 (Kind heav'n afford him everlasting rest!)

Full hearty — his love, and I can shew  
 The tokens on my ribs in black and blue;  
 Yet with ■ knack my heart he could have won,  
 While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.  
 How quaint an appetite in woman reigns!  
 Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us pains:  
 Let men avoid us, and on them we leap;  
 A glutted market makes provision cheap.

In pure good-will I took this jovial spark,  
 Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.  
 He boarded with a widow in the town,  
 A trusty gossip, one dame Alison;  
 Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,  
 Better than e'er our parish priest could do.  
 To her I told whatever could befall:  
 Had but my husband piss'd against a wall,  
 Or done a thing that might have cost his life,  
 She—and my niece—and one more worthy wife,  
 Had known it all: what most he would conceal,  
 To these I made ■ scruple to reveal.  
 Oft has he blush'd from ■ to ear for shame  
 That e'er he told ■ secret to his dame.

It so befell, in holy time of Lent,  
 That oft a-day I to this gossip went;

(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town)  
 From house to house we rambled up and down,  
 This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour Alse,

To see, be seen, to tell, and gather tales.

Visits to ev'ry church we daily paid,

And march'd in ev'ry holy masquerade;

The stations duly and the vigils kept,

Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.

At sermons, too, I shone in scarlet gay;

The wasting moth ne'er spoil'd my best array;

The cause was this, I wore it ev'ry day.

"Twas when fresh May her early blossoms yields,  
 This clerk and I were walking in the fields.

We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,

I pawn'd my honour and engag'd my vow,

If e'er I laid my husband in his urn,

That he, and only he, should serve my turn.

We straight struck hands, the bargain was agreed;

I still have shifts against a time of need.

The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole

Can never be a mouse of any soul.

I vow'd I scarce could sleep since first I knew him,

And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him;

If e'er I slept I dream'd of him alone,  
 And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown:  
 All this I said; but dreams, sirs, I had none:  
 I follow'd but my crafty crony's lore,  
 Who bid me tell this lie—and twenty more.

Thus day by day and month by month we past;  
 It pleas'd the Lord to take my spouse at last.  
 I tore my gown, I soil'd my locks with dust,  
 And beat my breasts, as wretched widows—must.  
 Before my face my handkerchief I spread,  
 To hide the floods of tears I did—not shed.  
 The good man's coffin to the church was borne;  
 Around the neighbours, and my clerk too, mourn;  
 But as he march'd, good gods! he show'd a pair  
 Of legs and feet so clean, so strong, ■ fair!  
 Of twenty winters' age he seem'd to be;  
 I (to say truth) was twenty more than he;  
 But vig'rous still, a lively buxom dame,  
 And had a wond'rous gift to quench ■ flame.  
 A conj'rer once, that deeply could divine,  
 Assur'd me Mars in Taurus was my sign.  
 As the stars order'd, such my life has been:  
 Alas, alas! that ever love was sin!

Fair Venus gave me fire and sprightly grace,  
 And Mars assurance and a dauntless face.  
 By virtue of this pow'rful constellation,  
 I follow'd always my own inclination.

But to my tale: A month scarce pass'd away,  
 With dance and song we kept the nuptial day.  
 All I possess'd I gave to his command,  
 My goods and chattels, money, house, and land;  
 But oft repented, and repent it still;  
 He prov'd ■ rebel to my sov'reign will;  
 Nay once, by heav'n! he struck me on the face.  
 Hear but the fact, and judge yourselves the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I,  
 And knew full well to raise my voice on high;  
 As true a rambler as I was before,  
 And would be so in spite of all he swore.  
 He against this right sagely would advise,  
 And old examples set before my eyes;  
 Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,  
 Of Gracchus' mother, and Duilius' wife;  
 And close the sermon, ■ beseem'd his wit,  
 With some grave sentence out of Holy Writ.  
 Oft would he say, Who builds his house on sands  
 Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands;

Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam,  
 Deserves a fool's cap and long ears at home.  
 All this avail'd not, for whoe'er he be  
 That tells my faults, I hate him mortally;  
 And so do numbers more I'll boldly say,  
 Men, women, clergy, regular, and lay.

My spouse (who was, you know, to learning bred)  
 A certain treatise oft at ev'ning read,  
 Where divers authours (whom the dev'l confound  
 For all their lies) were in one volume bound:  
 Valerius whole, and of St. Jerome part;  
 Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art,  
 Solomon's Proverbs, Eloïsa's loves,  
 And many more than sure the church approves.  
 More legends were there here of wicked wives  
 Than good in all the Bible and saints' lives.  
 Who drew the lion vanquish'd? 'Twas a man;  
 But could we women write as scholars can,  
 Men should stand mark'd with far more wickedness  
 Than all the sons of Adam could redress.  
 Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies,  
 And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise.  
 Those play the scholars who can't play the men,  
 And use that weapon which they have, their pen:

When old, and past the relish of delight,  
 Then down they sit, and in their dotage write  
 That not one woman keeps her marriage-vow.  
 (This by, the way, but to my purpose now:)

It chanc'd my husband, on a winter's night,  
 Read in this book aloud with strange delight,  
 How the first female (as the Scriptures show)  
 Brought her own spouse and all his race to woe;  
 How Samson fell; and he whom Dejanire  
 Wrapp'd in th' envenom'd shirt, and set on fire;  
 How curs'd Eriphyle her lord betray'd,  
 And the dire ambush Clytemnestia laid;  
 But what most pleas'd him was the Cretan dame  
 And husband-bull— Oh, monstrous! fy, for shame!

He had by heart the whole detail of woe  
 Xantippe made her good man undergo;  
 How oft she scolded in a day he knew,  
 How many pisspots on the sage she threw,  
 Who took it patiently, and wip'd his head:  
 ■ Rain follows thunder,' that was all he said.

He read how Arius to his friend complain'd  
 A fatal tree was growing in his land,  
 On which threc wives successively had twin'd  
 A sliding noose, and waver'd in the wind.

Where grows this plant, reply'd the friend, oh!  
where?

For better fruit did never orchard bear:  
Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,  
And in my garden planted it shall be.

Then how two wives their lords' destruction prove,  
Thro' hatred one, and one thro' too much love;  
That for her husband mix'd a pois'nous draught,  
And this for lust ■ am'rous philtre bought:  
The nimble juice soon seiz'd his giddy head,  
Frantic at night, and in the morning dead.

How some with swords their sleeping lords have  
slain,

And some have hammer'd nails into their brain,  
And some have drench'd them with ■ deadly potion:  
All this he read, and read with great devotion.

Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and  
frown'd;  
But when no end of these vile tales I found,  
When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,  
And half the night ■ thus consum'd in vain,  
Provok'd to vengeance, three large leaves I tore,  
And with one buffet fell'd him on the floor.

With that my husband in a fury rose,  
 And down he settled — with hearty blows.  
 I groan'd, and lay extended on my side;  
 Oh! thou hast slain me for my wealth, I cry'd:  
 Yet I forgive thee—take my last embrace—  
 He wept, kind soul! and stoop'd to kiss my face:  
 I took him such a box as turn'd him blue,  
 Then sigh'd and cry'd, Adieu, my dear, adieu!

But after many a hearty struggle past,  
 I condescended to be pleas'd at last.  
 Soon as he said, My mistress and my wife!  
 Do what you list the term of all your life,  
 I took to heart the merits of the cause,  
 And stood content to rule by wholesome laws;  
 Receiv'd the reins of absolute command,  
 With all the government of house and land,  
 And empire o'er his tongue and o'er his hand.  
 As for the volume that revil'd the dames,  
 'Twas torn to fragments, and condemn'd to flames.

Now heav'n on all my husbands gone bestow  
 Pleasures above for tortures felt below:  
 That rest they wish'd for grant them in the grave,  
 And bless those souls my conduct help'd to save!



IMITATIONS  
OF  
ENGLISH POETS.

*Done by the Author in his youth.*



## IMITATIONS.

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### CHAUCER.

WOMEN ben full of ragerie,  
Yet swinken nat sans secresie.  
Thilke moral shall ye understand,  
From schoole-boy's tale of fayre Irelond;  
Which to the fennes hath him betake,  
To filche the grey ducke fro the lake.  
Right then there passen by the way  
His aunt, and eke her daughters tway.  
Ducke in his trowsers hath he hent,  
Not to be spy'd of ladies gent.  
‘ But ho! our nephew,’ crieth one,  
‘ Ho!’ quoth another, “ Cozen John;”  
And stoppen, and lough, and callen out—  
This sely clerke full low doth lout:  
They asken that, and talken this,  
‘ Lo, here is coz, and here is miss.’  
But, — he glozeth with speeches soote,  
The ducke sore tickleth his erse roote:

Fore-piece and buttons all-to-brest  
 Forth thrust a white neck and red crest.  
 ' Te-hee,' cry'd ladies; clérke nought spake:  
 Miss star'd, and grey ducke crieth ' quaake.'  
 ' O moder, moder!' quoth the daughter,  
 ' Be thilke same thing maids longen a'ter?  
 Bette is to pine on coals and chalke,  
 Then trust on mon whose yerde can talke.'

## S P E N S E R.

## THE ALLEY.

## I.

IN ev'ry town where Thamis rolls his tyde,  
 A narrow pass there is, with houses low,  
 Where ever and anon the stream is ey'd,  
 And many a boat soft sliding to and fro:  
 There oft ~~are~~ heard the notes of infant woe,  
 The short thick sob, loud scream, and shriller squall:  
 How can ye, mothers, vex your children so?  
 Some play, some eat, some cack against the wall,  
 And as they crouchen low for bread and butter call.

## II.

And on the broken pavement, here and there,  
 Doth many a stinking sprat and herring lie;  
 A brandy and tobacco shop is near,  
 And hens, and dogs, and hogs, are feeding by;  
 And here a sailor's jacket hangs to dry.  
 At ev'ry door are sunburnt matrons seen,  
 Mending old nets to catch the scaly fry;  
 Now singing shrill, and scolding eft between;  
 Scolds answer foul-mouth'd scolds; bad neighbour-  
 hood I ween.

## III.

The snappish cur (the passengers annoy)  
 Close at my heel with yelping treble flies;  
 The whimp'ring girl, and hoarser screaming boy,  
 Join to the yelping treble shrilling cries;  
 The scolding quean to louder notes doth rise,  
 And her full pipes those shrilling cries confound;  
 To her full pipes the grunting hog replies:  
 The grunting hogs alarm the neighbours round,  
 And curs, girls, boys, and scolds, in the deep buse  
 are drown'd.

## iv.

Hard by a sty, beneath ■ roof of thatch,  
 Dwelt Obloquy, who in hēr early days  
 Baskets of fish at Billingsgate did watch,  
 Cod, whiting, oyster, mackrel, sprat, or plaice:  
 There learn'd she speech from tongues that never  
 cease.

Slander beside her like a magpie chatters,  
 With Envy (spitting cat), dread foe to peace;  
 Like ■ curs'd cur, Malice before her clatters,  
 And vexing ev'ry wight, tears clothes and all to tatters.

## v.

Her dugs were mark'd by ev'ry collier's hand;  
 Her mouth was black as bull-dogs at the stall:  
 She scratch'd, bit, and spar'd ne lace ■ band,  
 And bitch and rogue her answer was to all;  
 Nay, e'en the parts of shame by name would call:  
 Yea, when she passed by or lane or nook,  
 Would greet the man who turn'd him to the wall,  
 And by his hand obscene the porter took,  
 Nor ever did askance like modest virgin look.

## vi.

Such place hath Deptford, navy-building town,  
 Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch;

Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,  
 And Twick'nam such, which fairer scenes enrich,  
 Grots, statues, urns, and Jo—n's dog and bitch ;  
 Ne village is without, on either side,  
 All up the silver Thames, or all adown ;  
 Ne Richmond's self, from whose tall front are ey'd  
 Vales, spires, meand'ring streams, and Windsor's  
 tow'ry pride.

## WALLER.

## OF A LADY SINGING TO HER LUTE.

FAIR charmer! cease; nor make your voice's prize  
 A heart resign'd the conquest of your eyes:  
 Well might, alas! that threaten'd vessel fail,  
 Which winds and lightning both at once assail.  
 We were too bless'd with these enchanting lays,  
 Which must be heav'nly when an angel plays:  
 But killing charms your lover's death contrive,  
 Lest heav'nly music should be heard alive.  
 Orpheus could charm the trees; but thus a tree,  
 Taught by your hand, can charm no less than he.  
 A poet made the silent wood pursue;  
 This vocal wood had drawn the poet too.

ON  
A FAN OF THE AUTHOR'S DESIGN,IN WHICH WAS PAINTED THE STORY OF CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS,  
WITH THE MOTTO 'AURA VENI.'

COME, gentle air! th' Æolian shepherd said,  
While Procris panted in the secret shade;  
Come, gentle air! the fairer Delia ~~cried~~,  
While at her feet her swain expiring lies.  
Lo! the glad gales o'er all her beauties stray,  
Breathe on her lips, and in her bosom play!  
In Delia's hand this toy is fatal found,  
Nor could that fabled dart more surely wound:  
Both gifts destructive to the givers prove;  
Alike both lovers fall by those they love.  
Yet guiltless too this bright destroyer lives,  
At random wounds, nor knows the wounds she gives:  
She views the story with attentive eyes,  
And pities Procris while her lover dies.

## COWLEY.

## THE GARDEN.

FAIN would my muse the flow'ry treasures sing,  
 And humble glories of the youthful spring;  
 Where op'ning roses breathing sweets diffuse,  
 And soft carnations show'r their balmy dews;  
 Where lilies smile in virgin robes of white,  
 The thin undress of superficial light;  
 And vary'd tulips show so dazzling gay,  
 Blushing in bright diversities of day.  
 Each painted flowret in the lake below  
 Surveys its beauties, whence its beauties grow;  
 And pale Narcissus, on the bank in vain  
 Transform'd, gazes on himself again.  
 Here aged trees cathedral walks compose,  
 And mount the hill in venerable rows;  
 There the green infants in their beds are laid,  
 The garden's hope, and its expected shade.  
 Here orange-trees with blooms and pendants shine,  
 And vernal honours to their autumn join;  
 Exceed their promise in the ripen'd store,  
 Yet in the rising blossom promise more.

There in bright drops the crystal fountains play,  
 By laurels shielded from the piercing day:  
 Where Daphne, now ■ tree as once a maid,  
 Still from Apollo vindicates her shade; .  
 Still turns her beauties from th' invading beam,  
 Nor seeks in vain for succour to the stream.  
 The strain at once preserves her virgin leaves,  
 At once a shelter from her boughs receives,  
 Where summer's beauty midst of winter stays,  
 And winter's coolness spite of summer's rays.

WEEPING<sup>9</sup>.

WHILE Celia's tears make sorrow bright,  
 Proud grief sits swelling in her eyes;  
 The sun, next those the fairest light,  
 Thus from the ocean first did rise:  
 And thus through mists we see the sun,  
 Which else we durst not gaze upon.

These silver drops, like morning dew,  
 Foretell the fervour of the day:  
 So from one cloud soft show'rs we view,  
 And blasting lightnings burst away.

The stars that fall from Celia's eye  
 Declare our doom in drawing nigh.

The baby in that sunny sphere  
 So like ■ Phaëton appears,  
 That heav'n, the threaten'd world to spare,  
 Thought fit to drown him in her tears ;  
 Else might th' ambitious nymph aspire  
 To set, like him, heav'n too on fire.

## EARL OF ROCHESTER.

## ON SILENCE.

## I.

SILENCE ! coeval with eternity ;  
 Thou wert ere nature's self began to be,  
 'Twas one vast nothing all, and all slept fast in thee.

## II.

Thine was the sway ere heav'n was form'd, or earth,  
 Ere fruitful thought conceiv'd creation's birth,  
 Or midwife word gave aid, and spoke the infant  
 forth.

## III.

Then various elements against thee join'd,  
 In one more various animal combin'd,  
 And fram'd the clam'rous race of busy humankind.

## IV.

The tone mov'd gently first, and speech was low,  
 Till wrangling science taught it noise and show,  
 And wicked wit arose, thy most abusive foe.

## V.

But rebel wit deserts thee oft in vain:  
 Lost in the maze of words he turns again,  
 And seeks a surer state, and courts thy gentle reign.

## VI.

Afflicted sense thou kindly dost set free,  
 Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,  
 And routed reason finds a safe retreat in thee.

## VII.

With thee in private modest dulness lies,  
 And in thy bosom lurks in thought's disguise;  
 Thou varnisher of fools, and cheat of all the wise!

## VIII.

Yet thy indulgence is by both confess;  
 Folly by thee lies sleeping in the breast,  
 And 'tis in thee at last that wisdom seeks for rest.

## IX.

Silence ! the knave's repute, the whore's good name,  
 The only honour of the wishing dame;  
 The very want of tongue makes thec a kind of fame.

## X.

But couldst thou seize some tongues that now are  
 free,  
 How church and state should be oblig'd to thee !  
 At senate and at bar how welcome wouldest thou be !

## XI.

Yet speech, e'en there, submissively withdraws  
 From rights of subjects, and the poor man's cause :  
 Then pompous silence reigns, and stills the noisy  
 laws.

## XII.

Past services of friends, good deeds of foes,  
 What fav'rites gain, and what the nation owes,  
 Fly the forgetful world, and in thy arms repose.

## XIII.

The country wit, religion of the town,  
 The courtier's learning, policy o' th' gown,  
 Are best by thee express'd, and shine in thec alone.

## XIV.

The parson's cant, the lawyer's sophistry,

Lord's quibble, critic's jest; all end in thee;  
All rest in peace at last, and sleep eternally.

## EARL OF DORSET.

## ARTEMISIA.

THOUGH Artemisia talks by fits  
Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;  
Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke:  
Yet in some things methinks she fails;  
'Twere well if she would pare her nails,  
And wear a cleaner smock.

Haughty and huge as High-Dutch bride,  
Such nastiness and so much pride  
Are oddly join'd by fate:  
On her large squab you find her spread,  
Like a fat corpse upon a bed,  
That lies and stinks in state.

She wears no colours (sign of grace)  
On any part except her face;  
All white and black beside:

Dauntless her look, her gesture proud,  
 Her voice theatrically loud,  
 And masculine her stride.

So have I seen, in black and white,  
 A prating thing, a magpie hight,  
 Majestically stalk;  
 A stately worthless animal,  
 That plies the tongue, and wags the tail,  
 All flutter, pride, and talk.

## PHRYNE.

PHRYNE had talents for mankind;  
 Open she was and unconfin'd,  
 Like some free port of trade:  
 Merchants unloaded here their freight,  
 And agents from each foreign state  
 Here first their entry made.

Her learning and good breeding such,  
 Whether th' Italian or the Dutch,  
 Spaniards or French, came to her;

To all obliging she'd appear;  
 'Twas *Si Signior*, 'twas *Yaw Mynheer*,  
 'Twas *S'il vous plait*, *Monsieur*.

Obscure by birth, renown'd by crimes,  
 Still changing names, religions, climes,  
 At length she turns a bride:  
 In diamonds, pearls, and rich brocades,  
 She shines the first of batter'd jades,  
 And flutters in her pride.

So have I known those insects fair  
 (Which curious Germans hold so rare)  
 Still vary shapes and dyes;  
 Still gain new titles with new forms;  
 First grubs obscene, then wriggling worms,  
 Then painted butterflies.

DR. SWIFT.

THE HAPPY LIFE OF A COUNTRY  
 PARSON.

PARSON, these things in thy possessing  
 Are better than the bishop's blessing:

A wife that makes conserves; a steed  
 That carries double when there's need;  
 October store, and best Virginia,  
 Tythe pig, and mortuary guinea;  
 Gazettes sent gratis down and frank'd,  
 For which thy patron's weekly thank'd;  
 A large concordance, bound long since;  
 Sermons to Charles the First when prince;  
 A chronicle of ancient standing;  
 A Chrysostom to smooth thy band in:  
 The Polyglot—three parts—my text,  
 Howbeit—likewise—now to my next:  
 Lo here the Septuagint—and Paul,  
 To sum the whole—the close of all.

He that has these may pass his life,  
 Drink with the 'squire, and kiss his wife;  
 On Sundays preach, and eat his fill,  
 And fast on Fridays—if he will;  
 Toast church and queen, explain the news,  
 Talk with churchwardens about pews,  
 Pray heartily for some new gift,  
 And shake his head at Doctor S---t.



THE  
SATIRES  
OF  
DR. JOHN DONNE,  
DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S,  
VERSIFIED.

Quid vetat et nosmet Lucili scripta legentes  
Quærere, num illius, num rerum dura negârit  
Versiculos natura magis factos, et cuntes  
Mollius? Hor.



## SATIRE II.

Yes, thank my stars! as early as I knew  
This town, I had the sense to hate it too;  
Yet here, ■ e'en in hell, there must be still  
One giant-vice, so excellently ill,  
That all beside one pities, not abhors;  
As who knows Sappho smiles at other whores.

I grant that poetry's a crying sin;  
It brought (no doubt) th' excise and army in:  
Catch'd like the plague, or love, the Lord knows how,  
But that the cure is starving all allow;  
Yet like the papist's is the poet's state,  
Poor and disarm'd, and hardly worth your hate!

Here a lean bard, whose wit could never give  
Himself a dinner, makes an actor live:  
The thief condemn'd, in law already dead,  
So prompts and saves a rogue who cannot read.  
Thus ■ the pipes of some carv'd organ move,  
The gilded puppets dance and mount above:  
Heav'd by the breath th' inspiring bellows blow:  
Th' inspiring bellows lie and pant below.

One sings the fair; but songs no longer move;  
 No rat is rhym'd to death, nor maid to love;  
 In love's, in nature's spite, the siege they hold,  
 And scorn the flesh, the dev'l, and all but gold.

These write to lords, some mean reward to get,  
 As needy beggars sing at doors for meat:  
 Those write because all write, and so have still  
 Excuse for writing, and for writing ill.

Wretched, indeed! but far more wretched yet  
 Is he who makes his meal on others' wit:  
 'Tis chang'd, no doubt, from what it was before;  
 His rank digestion makes it wit no more:  
 Sense pass'd through him no longer is the same;  
 For food digested takes another name.

I pass o'er all those confessors and martyrs,  
 Who live like S—tt—n, or who die like Chartres,  
 Out-cant old Esdras, or out-drink his heir,  
 Out-usure Jews, or Irishmen out-swear;  
 Wicked as pages, who in early years  
 Act sins which Prisca's confessor scarce hears.  
 E'en those I pardon, for whose sinful sake  
 Schoolmen new tenments in hell must make;  
 Of whose strange crimes no canonist can tell  
 In what commandment's large contents they dwell.

One, one man only breeds my just offence,  
 Whom crimes gave wealth, and wealth gave impu-  
 dence :

Time, that at last matures ■ clap to pox;  
 Whose gentle progress makes ■ calf an ox,  
 And brings all natural events to pass,  
 Hath made him an attorney of an ass.

No young divine, new-benefic'd, can be-  
 More pert, more proud, more positive, than he.

What further could I wish the fop to do,  
 But turn a wit, and scribble verses too?  
 Pierce the soft lab'rinth of a lady's ear  
 With rhymes of this *per cent.* and that *per year*?

Or court a wife, spread out his wily parts,  
 Like nets, or lime-twigs, for rich widows' hearts;  
 Call himself barrister to ev'ry wench,  
 And woo in language of the Pleas and Bench?  
 Language which Boreas might to Auster hold,  
 More rough than forty Germans when they scold.

Curs'd be the wretch, so venal and so vain,  
 Paltry and proud as drabs in Drury-lane.  
 'Tis such a bounty as was never known,  
 If Peter deigns to help you to your own,

What thanks, what praise, if Peter but supplies!  
And what a solemn face if he denies!  
Grave, as when pris'ners shake the head, and swear  
'Twas only suretyship that brought 'em there.  
His office keeps your parchment fates entire,  
He starves with cold to save them from the fire;  
For you he walks the streets through rain or dust,  
For not in chariots Peter puts his trust:  
For you he sweats and labours at the laws,  
Takes God to witness he affects your cause,  
And lies to ev'ry lord in ev'ry thing,  
Like a king's favourite--or like a king.  
These are the talents that adorn them all,  
From wicked Waters e'en to godly ■ ■  
Not more of simony beneath black gowns,  
Nor more of bastardy in heirs to crowns.  
In shillings and in pence at first they deal,  
And steal so little, few perceive they steal;  
Till like the sea, they compass all the land,  
From Scots to Wight, from Mount to Dover strand:  
And when rank widows purchase luscious nights,  
Or when a duke to Jansen punts at White's,  
Or city-heir in mortgage melts away,  
Satan himself feels far less joy than they.

Piece-meal they win this acre first, then that,  
 Glean on, and gather up the whole estate; .  
 Then strongly fencing ill-got wealth by law,  
 Indentures, cov'nants, articles, they draw,  
 Large as the fields themselves, and larger far  
 Than civil codes, with all their glosses, are;  
 So vast, our new divines, we must confess,  
 Are fathers of the church for writing less:  
 But let them write, for you each rogue impairs  
 The deeds, and dext'rously omits *ses heires*:  
 No commentator can more slily pass  
 O'er a learn'd unintelligible place;  
 Or in quotation shrewd divines leave out  
 Those words that would against them clear the doubt.

So Luther thought the Pater-noster long,  
 When doom'd to say his beads and even-song;  
 But having cast his cowl, and left those laws,  
 Adds to Christ's pray'r the pow'r and glory clause.

The lands are bought; but where are to be found  
 Those ancient woods that shaded all the ground?  
 We see no new-built palaces aspire,  
 No kitchens emulate the vestal fire.  
 Where are those troops of poor, that throng'd of yore  
 The good old landlord's hospitable door?

Well, I could wish that still, in lordly domes,  
Some beasts were kill'd, tho' not whole hecatombs;  
That both extremes were banish'd from their walls,  
Carthusian fasts and fulsome bacchanals;  
And all mankind might that just mean oberve,  
In which none e'er could surfeit, none could starve:  
These as good works, 'tis true, we all allow,  
But, oh! these works are not in fashion now:  
Like rich old wardrobes, things extremely rare,  
Extremely fine, but what no man will wear.

Thus much I've said, I trust without offence;  
Let no court sycophant pervert my sense,  
Nor sly informer watch, these words to draw  
Within the reach of treason or the law.

## SATIRE IV.

WELL; if it be my time to quit the stage,  
Adieu to all the follies of the age!  
I die in charity with fool and knave,  
Secure of peace at least beyond the grave.  
I've had my purgatory here betimes,  
And paid for all my satires, all my rhymes.  
The poets' hell, its tortures, fiends, and flames,  
To this were trifles, toys, and empty names.

With foolish pride my heart was never fir'd,  
Nor the vain itch t' admire or be admir'd;  
I hop'd for no commission from his grace;  
I bought no benefice, I begg'd no place;  
Had no new verses nor new suit to show,  
Yet went to court!—the dev'l would have it so.  
But as the fool that in reforming days  
Would go to mass in jest (as story says)  
Could not but think to pay his fine was odd,  
Since 'twas no form'd design of serving God;  
So was I punish'd, — if full — proud,  
As prone to ill, and negligent of good,

As deep in debt, without a thought to pay,  
 As vain, — idle, and — false — they  
 Who live at court, for going once that way !  
 Scarce was I enter'd, when, behold ! there came  
 A thing which Adam had been pos'd to name ;  
 Noah had refus'd it lodging in his ark,  
 Where all the race of reptiles might embark :  
 A verier monster than on Afric's shore  
 The sun e'er got, or slimy Nilus bore,  
 Or Sloane or Woodward's wondrous shelves contain,  
 Nay, all that lying travellers can feign.  
 The watch would hardly let him pass at noon,  
 At night would swear him dropp'd out of the moon :  
 One whom the mob, when next we find or make  
 A popish plot, shall for a Jesuit take,  
 And the wise justice, starting from his chair,  
 Cry, by your priesthood, tell me what you are ?

Such was the wight : th' apparel on his back,  
 Tho' coarse was rev'rend, and tho' bare was black :  
 The suit, if by the fashion one might guess,  
 Was velvet in the youth of good queen Bess,  
 But mere tufftaffety what now remain'd ;  
 So time, that changes all things, had ordain'd !

Our sons shall see it leisurely decay,  
 First turn plain rash, then vanish quite away.

\*This thing has travell'd, speaks each language too,  
 And knows what's fit for ev'ry state to do;  
 Of whose best phrase and courtly accent join'd  
 He forms one tongue, exotic and refin'd.

Talkers I've learn'd to bear; Motteux I knew,  
 Henley himself I've heard, and Budgell too,  
 The doctor's wormwood style, the hash of tongues  
 A pedant makes, the storm of Gonson's lungs,  
 The whole artill'ry of the terms of war,  
 And (all those plagues in one) the bawling bar:  
 These I could bear; but not a rogue so civil  
 Whose tongue will compliment you to the devil:  
 A tongue that can cheat widows, cancel scores,  
 Make Scots speak treason, cozen subtlest whores,  
 With royal favourites in flatt'ry vie,  
 And Oldmixon and Burnet both outlie.

He spies me out; I whisper, gracious God!  
 What sin of mine could merit such a rod?  
 That all the shot of dulness now must be  
 From this thy blunderbuss discharg'd on me!  
 Permit, he cries, my stranger to your fame,  
 To crave your sentiment, if . . . 's your name.

What speech esteem you most? The king's, said I.  
 But the best words?—O, sir, the dictionary.  
 You miss my aim; I ~~mean~~ the most acute;  
 And perfect speaker?—Onslow, past dispute.  
 But, sir, of writers? Swift for closer style,  
 But Hoadly for a period of a mile.  
 Why, yes, 'tis granted, these indeed may pass;  
 Good common linguists, and so Panurge was;  
 Nay, troth th' Apostles (though perhaps too rough)  
 Had once a pretty gift of tongues enough:  
 Yet these were all poor gentlemen! I dare  
 Affirm 'twas travel made them what they were.

Thus others' talents having nicely shown,  
 He came by sure transition to his own;  
 Till I cry'd out, You prove yourself so able,  
 Pity you was not druggerman at Babel;  
 For had they found a linguist half so good,  
 I make no question but the tow'r had stood.

Obliging sir! for courts you sure were made,  
 Why then for ever bury'd in the shade?  
 Spirits like you should see and should be seen;  
 The king would smile on you—at least the queen.  
 Ah, gentle sir! you courtiers so cajole us—  
 But Tully has it, *Nunquam minus solus*:

And ■ for courts, forgive me if I say  
 No lessons now are taught the Spartan way:  
 Though in his pictures lust be full display'd,  
 Few are the converts Aretine has made;  
 And though the court show vice exceeding clear,  
 None should, by my advice, learn virtue there.

At this entranc'd, he lifts his hands and eyes,  
 Squeaks like ■ high-stretch'd lutestring, and replies;  
 Oh, 'tis the sweetest of all earthly things  
 To gaze on princes, and to talk of kings!  
 Then, happy man who shows the tombs! said I,  
 He dwells amidst the royal family;  
 He ev'ry day from king to king can walk,  
 Of all our Harries, all our Edwards talk,  
 And get, by speaking truth of monarchs dead,  
 What few can of the living, ease and bread.  
 Lord, sir, a mere mechanic! strangely low,  
 And coarse of phrase—your English all are so.  
 How elegant your Frenchmen! Mine, d'ye mean?  
 I have but one; I hope the fellow's clean.  
 O, sir, politely so! nay, let me die,  
 Your only wearing is your paduasoy.  
 Not, sir, my only; I have better still,  
 And this you see is but my dishabille—

Wild to get loose, his patience I provoke,  
 Mistake, confound, object at all he spoke:  
 But as coarse iron, sharpen'd, mangles more,  
 And itch most hurts when anger'd to a sore;  
 So when you plague a fool, 'tis still the curse,  
 You only make the matter worse and worse.

He past it o'er; affects an easy smile  
 At all my peevishness, and turns his style.  
 He asks, what news? I tell him of new plays,  
 New cunuchs, harlequins, and operas.  
 He hears, and as a still, with simples in it,  
 Between each drop it gives stays half a minute,  
 Loath to enrich me with too quick replies,  
 By little and by little drops his lies.  
 Mere household trash! of birthnights, balls, and  
 shows,  
 More than ten Holinsheds, or Halls, or Stows.  
 When the queen frown'd or smil'd he knows, and  
 what  
 A subtle minister may make of that:  
 Who sins, with whom: who got his pension rug,  
 Or quicken'd a reversion by a drug:  
 Whose place is quarter'd out three parts in four,  
 And whether to a bishop or a whore:

Who having lost his credit, pawn'd his rent,  
 Is therefore fit to have a government:  
 Who in the secret deals in stocks secure,  
 And cheats th' unknowing widow and the poor:  
 Who makes a trust of charity a job,  
 And gets an act of parliament to rob:  
 Why turnpikes rise, and now no cit nor clown  
 Can gratis see the country or the town:  
 Shortly no lad shall chuck or lady vole,  
 But some excising courtier will have toll:  
 He tells what strumpet places sells for life,  
 What 'squire his lands, what citizen his wife:  
 At last (which proves him wiser still than all)  
 What lady's face is not a whited wall.

As one of Woodward's patients, sick, and sore,  
 I puke, I nauseate—yet he thrusts in more;  
 Trims Europe's balance, tops the statesman's part,  
 And talks gazettes and postboys o'er by heart.  
 Like a big wife at sight of loathsome meat  
 Ready to cast, I yawn, I sigh and sweat.  
 Then as a licens'd spy, whom nothing can  
 Silence or hurt, he libels the great man;  
 Swears ev'ry place entail'd for years to come  
 In sure succession to the day of doom:

He names the price for ev'ry office paid,  
 And says our wars thrive ill because delay'd:  
 Nay hints 'tis by connivance of the court  
 That Spain robs on, and Dunkirk's still a port.  
 Not more amazement seiz'd on Circe's guests  
 To see themselves fall endloug into beasts,  
 Than mine, to find a subject stay'd and wise  
 Already half-turn'd traitor by surprise.  
 I felt th' infection slide from him to me,  
 As in the pox some give it to get free;  
 And quick to swallow me, methought I saw  
 One of our giant statues ope its jaw.

In that nice moment, as another lie  
 Stood just a-tilt, the minister came by.  
 To him he flies, and bows, and bows again,  
 Then, close as Umbra, joins the dirty train.  
 Not Fannius' self more impudently near,  
 When half his nose is in his prince's ear.  
 I quak'd at heart; and, still afraid to see  
 All the court fill'd with stranger things than he,  
 Ran out as fast as one that pays his bail,  
 And dreads more actions, hurries from a jail.

Bear me, some god! O quickly bear me hence  
 To wholesome solitude, the nurse of sense,

Where contemplation prunes her ruffled wings,  
 And the free soul looks down to pity kings!  
 There sober thought pursu'd th' amusing theme,  
 Till fancy coloured it, and forin'd a dream.  
 A vision hermits can to hell transport,  
 And forc'd e'en me to see the damn'd at court.  
 Not Dante dreaming all th' infernal state  
 Beheld such scenes of envy, sin, and hate.  
 Base fear becomes the guilty, not the free,  
 Suits tyrants, plunderers, but suits not me:  
 Shall I, the terror of this sinful town,  
 Care if a liv'ry lord or smile or frown?  
 Who cannot flatter, and detest who can,  
 Tremble before a noble serving-man?  
 O my fair mistress, truth! shall I quit thee  
 For huffing, braggart, puffed nobility?  
 Thou who, since yesterday, hast roll'd o'er all  
 The busy idle blockheads of the ball,  
 Hast thou, O sun! beheld an emptier sort  
 Than such as swell this bladder of a court?  
 Now pox on those who shew a court in wax!  
 It ought to bring all courtiers on their backs;  
 Such painted puppets! such a varnish'd race  
 Of hollow gewgaws, only dress and face!

Such waxen noses, stately staring things—  
 No wonder some folks bow, and think them kings.  
 See! where the British' youth, engag'd no more  
 At Fig's, at White's, with felons, or a whore,  
 Pay their last duty to the court, and come  
 All fresh and fragrant to the drawing-room,  
 In hues as gay, and odours as divine,  
 As the fair fields they sold to look so fine.  
 That's velvet for a king! the flatt'rer swears;  
 'Tis true, for ten days hence 'twill be king Lear's.  
 Our court may justly to our stage give rules,  
 That helps it both to fools' coats and to fools.  
 And why not players strut in courtiers' clothes?  
 For these are actors too as well as those.  
 Wants reach all states; they beg but better drest,  
 And all is splendid poverty at best.  
 Painted for sight, and essenc'd for the smell,  
 Like frigates fraught with spice and cochineal,  
 Sail in the ladies: how each pirate eyes  
 So weak ■ vessel and so rich a prize!  
 Top-gallant he, and she in all her trim,  
 He boarding her, she striking sail to him.  
 Dear countess! you have charms all hearts to hit!  
 And, sweet sir Fopling! you have so much wit!

Such wits and beauties are not prais'd for nought,  
 For both the beauty and the wit are boughs.  
 'Twould burst e'en Heraclitus with the spleen  
 To see those antics, Fopling and Courtin':  
 The presence seems, with things so richly odd,  
 The mosque of Mahound, or some queer pagod.  
 See them survey their limbs by Durer's rules,  
 Of all beau-kind the best proportion'd foels!  
 Adjust their clothes, and to confession draw  
 Those venial sins, an atom, or a straw:  
 But, oh! what terrors must distract the soul  
 Convicted of that mortal crime, a hole;  
 Or should one pound of powder less bespread  
 Those monkey-tails that wag behind their head!  
 Thus finish'd, and corrected to a hair,  
 They march, to prate their hour before the fair.  
 So first to preach a white-glov'd chaplain goes,  
 With band of lily, and with cheek of rose,  
 Sweeter than Sharon, in immac'late trim,  
 Neatness itself, impertinent in him.  
 Let but the ladies smile and they are blest:  
 Prodigious! how the things protest, protest.  
 Peace, fools! or Gonson will for papists seize you,  
 If once he catch you at your Jesu! Jesu!

Nature made ev'ry fop to plague his brother,  
 Just ■ one beauty mortifies another.  
 But here's the captain that will plague them both,  
 Whose air cries arm! whose very look's an oath.  
 The captain's honest, sirs, and that's enough,  
 Though his soul's bullet, and his body buff.  
 He spits fore-right; his haughty chest before,  
 Like batt'ring rams, beats open ev'ry door;  
 And with ■ face as red, and as awry,  
 As Herod's hang-dogs in old tapestry,  
 Scarecrow to boys, the breeding woman's curse,  
 Has yet a strange ambition to look worse;  
 Confounds the civil, keeps the rude in awe,  
 Jests like a licens'd fool, commands like law.

Frighted, I quit the room, but leave it so  
 As men from gaols to execution go;  
 For hung with deadly sins I see the wall,  
 And lin'd with giants deadlier than 'em all:  
 Each man an Askapart, of strength to toss,  
 For quoits, both Temple-bar and Charing-cross.  
 Scar'd at the grisly forms, I sweat, I fly,  
 And shake all o'er, like a discover'd spy.

Courts are too much for wits so weak as mine:  
 Charge them with heav'n's artill'ry, bold divine!

From such alone the great rebukes endure  
Whose satire's sacred, and whose rage sec're:  
'Tis mine to wash ■ few light stains, but their's  
To deluge sin, and drown a court in tears.  
Howe'er, what's now apocrypha, my wit,  
In time to come, may pass for holy writ.



E P I L O G U E  
TO THE  
SATIRES;  
IN TWO DIALOGUES.

*First entitled 1736,*  
*from the year in which they were written and published.*



## DI A LOGUE I.

F. Not twice a twelvemonth you appear in print,  
And when it comes the court see nothing in't.  
You grow correct that once with rapture writ,  
And are, besides, too moral for a wit.  
Decay of parts, alas! we all must feel—  
Why now, this moment, don't I see you steal?  
'Tis all from Horace; Horace long before ye  
Said 'Tories call'd him Whig, and Whigs a Tory,'  
And taught his Romans, in much better metre,  
' To laugh at fools who put their trust in Peter.'

But Horace, sir, was delicate, was nice;  
Bubo observes he lash'd no sort of vice:  
Horace would say, sir Billy serv'd the crown,  
Blunt could do bus'ness, Higgins knew the town;  
In Sappho touch the failings of the sex,  
In rev'rend bishops note some small neglects,  
And own the Spaniard did a waggish thing,  
Who cropt our ears, and sent them to the king.  
His sly, polite, insinuating style  
Could please at court, and make Augustus smile:

An artful manager, that crept between  
 His friend and shame, and was a kind of screen.  
 But, 'faith, your very friends will soon be sore;  
 Patriots there are who wish you'd jest no more—  
 And where's the glory? 'twill be only thought  
 The great man never offer'd you a groat.

Go see sir Robert—

*P.* See sir Robert!—hum—  
 And never laugh—for all my life to come?  
 Seen him I have; but in his happier hour  
 Of social pleasure, ill-exchang'd for pow'r;  
 Seen him, unumber'd with a venal tribe,  
 Smile without art, and win without a bribe.  
 Woald he oblige me? let me only find  
 He does not think me what he thinks mankind.  
 Come, come, at all I laugh he laughs, no doubt;  
 The only diff'rence is—I dare laugh out.

*F.* Why, yes: with Scripture still you may be  
 free;  
 A horse-laugh, if you please, at honesty;  
 A joke on Jekyll, or some odd old Whig,  
 Who never chang'd his principle or wig;  
 A patriot is a fool in ev'ry age,  
 Whom all lord chamberlains allow the stage;

These nothing hurts; they keep their fashion still,  
And wear their strange old virtue as they will.

If any ask you, 'Who's the man so near  
His prince that writes in verse, and has his ear?'  
Why, answer Littleton! and I'll engage  
The worthy youth shall ne'er be in a rage;  
But were his verses vile, his whisper base,  
You'd quickly find him in lord Fanny's case.  
Sejanus, Wolsey, hurt not honest Fleury,  
But well may put some statesmen in a fury.

Laugh then at any but at fools or foes;  
These you but anger, and you mend not those.  
Laugh at your friends, and, if your friends are sore,  
So much the better, you may laugh the more.  
To vice and folly to confine the jest  
Sets half the world, God knows, against the rest,  
Did not the sneer of more impartial men  
At sense and virtue balance all aghen.  
Judicious wits spread wide the ridicule,  
And charitably comfort knave and fool.

P. Dear sir, forgive the prejudice of youth:  
Adieu distinction, satire, warmth, and truth!  
Come, harmless characters that no one hit;  
Come, Henley's oratory, Osborne's wit!

The honey dropping from Favonia's tongue,  
 The flow'rs of Bubo, and the flow of Young!  
 The gracious dew of pulpit eloquence,  
 And all the well-whipt cream of courtly sense;  
 The first was H.. vy's, F.. 's next, and then  
 The S.. te's, and then H.. vy's once agen.

O come! that easy Ciceronian style,  
 So Latin yet so English all the while,  
 As, though the pride of Middleton and Bland,  
 All boys may read, and girls may understand!  
 Then might I sing without the least offence,  
 And all I sung should be the nation's sense;  
 Or teach the melancholy muse to mourn,  
 Hang the sad verse on Carolina's urn,  
 And hail her passage to the realms of rest,  
 All parts perform'd, and all her children blest!  
 So—Satire is no more—I feel it die—  
 No gazetteer more innocent than I—  
 And let, a God's name! ev'ry fool and knave  
 Be grac'd through life, and flatter'd in his grave.

*F.* Why so? if satire knows its time and place,  
 You still may lash the greatest—in disgrace;  
 For merit will by turns forsake them all;  
 Would you know when? exactly when they fall.

But let all satire in all changes spare  
 Immortal S...k, and grave De...re.  
 Silent and soft, ■ saints remove to heav'n,  
 All ties dissolv'd, and ev'ry sin forgiv'n,  
 These may some gentle ministerial wing  
 Receive, and place for ever near a king!  
 There where no passion, pride, or shame, transport,  
 Lull'd with the sweet nepenthe of a court;  
 There where no father's, brother's, friend's, disgrace  
 Once break their rest, or stir them from their place;  
 But past the sense of human miseries,  
 All tears are wip'd for ever from all eyes;  
 No check is known to blush, no heart to throb,  
 Save when they lose a question or a job.

P. Good heav'n forbid that I should blast their  
 glory,

Who know how like Whig ministers to Tory,  
 And when three sov'reigns died could scarce be vext,  
 Consid'ring what a gracious prince was next.  
 Have I, in silent wonder, seen such things  
 As pride in slaves, and avarice in kings?  
 And at ■ peer or peeress shall I fret,  
 Who starves a sister or forswears a debt?

Virtue, I grant you, is an empty boast;  
 But shall the dignity of vice be lost?  
 Ye gods! shall Cibber's son, without rebuke,  
 Swear like a lord, or Rich outwhore a duke?  
 A fav'rite's porter with his master vie,  
 Be brib'd as often, and as often lie?  
 Shall Ward draw contracts with a statesman's skill?  
 Or Japhet pocket, like his grace, a will?  
 Is it for Bond or Peter (paltry things)  
 To pay their debts, or keep their faith, like kings?  
 If Blount dispatch'd himself, he play'd the man,  
 And so may'st thou, illustrious Passeran!  
 But shall a printer, weary of his life,  
 Learn from their books to hang himself and wife?  
 This, this, my friend, I cannot, must not, bear;  
 Vice thus abus'd demands a nation's care;  
 This calls the church to deprecate our sin,  
 And hurls the thunder of the laws on gin.

Let modest Foster, if he will, excel  
 Ten metropolitans in preaching well;  
 A simple Quaker, or a Quaker's wife,  
 Outdo Landaffe in doctrine—yea, in life:  
 Let humble Allen, with a awkward shame,  
 Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.

Virtue may choose the high or low degree,  
 'Tis just alike to virtue and to me;  
 Dwell in a monk, or light upon a king,  
 She's still the same, belov'd, contented thing.  
 Vice is undone, if she forgets her birth,  
 And stoops from angels to the dregs of earth;  
 But 'tis the fall degrades her to a whore;  
 Let greatness own her, and she's mean no more:  
 Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,  
 Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless;  
 In golden chains the willing world she draws,  
 And her's the gospel is, and her's the laws;  
 Mounts the tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,  
 And sees pale virtue carted in her stead.  
 Lo! at the wheels of her triumphal car  
 Old England's genius, rough with many a scar,  
 Dragg'd in the dust! his arms hang idly round,  
 His flag inverted trails along the ground!  
 Our youth, all liv'ry'd o'er with foreign gold,  
 Before her dance: behind her crawl the old!  
 See thronging millions to the pagod run,  
 And offer country, parent, wife, or son!  
 Hear her black trumpet through the land proclaim,  
 That not to be corrupted is the shame.

In soldier, churchman, patriot, ■■■ in pow'r,  
'Tis av'rice all, ambition is no more!  
See all our nobles begging to be slaves!  
See all our fools aspiring to be knaves!  
The wit of cheats, the courage of a whore,  
Are what ten thousand envy and adore:  
All, all look up, with reverential awe,  
At crimes that 'scape, or triumph o'er the law:  
While truth, worth, wisdom, daily they decry—  
‘ Nothing is sacred now but villany.’

Yet may this verse (if such ■ verse remain)  
Show there was one who held it in disdain.

## DIALOGUE II.

*F.* "Tis all a libel—Paxton, sir, will say.

*P.* Not yet, my friend! to-morrow 'faith it may;  
And for that very cause I print to-day.  
How should I fret to mangle ev'ry line  
In rev'rence to the sins of thirty-nine?  
Vice with such giant strides comes on a main,  
Invention strives to be before in vain;  
Feign what I will, and paint it e'er so strong,  
Some rising genius sins up to my song.

*F.* Yet none but you by name the guilty lash;  
E'en Guthry saves half Newgate by a dash.  
Spare then the person, and expose the vice.

*P.* How, sir! not damn the sharper, but the dice?  
Come on then, satire! gen'ral unconfin'd,  
Spread thy broad wing, and souse on all the kind.  
Ye statesmen, priests, of one religion all!  
Ye tradesmen, vile, in army, court, or hall!  
Ye rev'rend atheists! *F.* Scandal! name them, who?

*P.* Why that's the thing you bid me not to do.  
Who starv'd a sister, who forswore a debt,  
I never nam'd; the town's inquiring yet.

The pois'ning dame—*F.* You mean—*P.* I don't.—

“ *F.* You do.

*P.* See, now I keep the secrets, and not you!

The bribing statesman—*F.* Hold, too high, you go.

*P.* The brib'd elector—*F.* There you stoop too low.

*P.* I fain would please you, if I knew with what.  
 Tell me which knave is lawful game, which not?  
 Must great offenders, once escap'd the crown,  
 Like royal harts, be never more run down?  
 Admit your law to spare the knight requires,  
 As beasts of nature may we hūt the squires?  
 Suppose I censure—you know what I mean—  
 To save a bishop, may I name a dean?

*F.* A dean, sir? no: his fortune is not made;  
 You hurt a man that's rising in the trade.

*P.* If not the tradesman who set up to-day,  
 Much less the 'prentice who to-morrow may.  
 Down, down, proud satire! tho' a realm be spoil'd,  
 Arraign no mightier thief than wretched Wild;  
 Or, if a court or country's made a job,  
 Go drench a pickpocket, and join the mob.

But, sir, I beg you (for the love of vice!)  
 The matter's weighty, pray consider twice:

Have you less pity for the needy cheat,  
 The poor and friendless villain, than the great?  
 Alas! the small discredit of a bribe  
 Scarce hurts the lawyer, but undoes the scribe.  
 Then better sure it charity becomes  
 To tax directors, who (thank God!) have plums;  
 Still better ministers, or if the thing  
 May pinch e'en there—why lay it on a king.

*F.* Stop! stop!

*P.* Must satire then nor rise nor fall?  
 Speak out, and bid me blame no rogues at all.  
*F.* Yes, strike that Wild, I'll justify the blow.  
*P.* Strike? why the man was hang'd ten years  
 ago:

Who now that obsolete example fears?  
 E'en Peter trembles only for his ears.

*F.* What, always Péter? Peter thinks you mad;  
 You make men desp'rate, if they once are bad,  
 Else might he take to virtue some years hence—

*P.* As S...k, if he lives, will love the prince.

*F.* Strange spleen to S...k!

*P.* Do I wrong the man?

God knows I praise a courtier where I can.

When I confess there is who feels for fame,  
 And' melts to goodness, need I Scarb'row name?  
 Pleas'd let me own, in Esher's peaceful grove,  
 (Where Kent and nature vie for Pelham's love)  
 The scene, the master, op'ning to my view,  
 I sit and dream I see my Craggs anew!

E'en in a bishop I can spy desert;  
 Secker is decent, Rundel has a heart;  
 Manners with candour are to Benson giv'n,  
 To Berkley ev'ry virtue under heav'n.

But does the court a worthy man remove?  
 That instant, I declare, he has my love:  
 I shun his zenith, court his mild decline;  
 Thus Somers once and Halifax were 'mine.  
 Oft in the clear still mirror of retreat  
 I study'd Shrewsbury, the wise and great:  
 Carleton's calm sense and Stanhope's noble flaine  
 Compar'd, and knew their gen'rous end the same:  
 How pleasing Atterbury's softer hour!  
 How shin'd the soul, unconquer'd, in the Tow'r!  
 How can I Pult'ney, Chesterfield, forget,  
 While Roman spirit charms, and attic wit?  
 Argyle, the state's whole thunder born to wield,  
 And shake alike the senate and the field?

Or Wyndham, just to freedom and the throne,  
 The master of our passions and his own? —  
 Names which I long have lov'd, nor lov'd in vain,  
 Rank'd with their friends, not number'd with their  
 train;

And if yet higher the proud list should end,  
 Still let me say, no foll'wer but a friend.

Yet think not friendship only prompts my lays;  
 I follow virtue; where she shines I praise,  
 Point she to priest or elder, Whig or Tory,  
 Or round a quaker's beaver cast a glory.

I never (to my sorrow I declare)  
 Din'd with the Man of Ross or my Lord May'r.  
 Some in their choice of friends (nay, look not grave)  
 Have still a secret bias to a knave:  
 To find an honest man I beat about,  
 And love him, court him, praise him, in or out.

*F.* Then why so few commended?

*P.* Not so fierce;  
 Find you the virtue, and I'll find the verse.  
 But random praise—the task can ne'er be done;  
 Each mother asks it for her booby son;  
 Each widow asks it for the best of men,  
 For him she weeps, for him she weds agen.

Praise cannot stoop, like satire, to the ground;  
 The number may be hang'd, but not be crown'd.  
 Enough for half the greatest of these days  
 To 'scape my censure, not expect my praise.  
 Are they not rich? what more can they pretend?  
 Dare they to hope a poet for their friend?  
 What Richelieu wanted, Louis scarce could gain,  
 And what young Ammon wish'd, but wish'd in vain.  
 No pow'r the muse's friendship can command;  
 No pow'r, when virtue claims it, can withstand.  
 To Cato, Virgil paid one honest line;  
 O let my country's friends illumine mine!  
 —What are you thinking? *F.* Faith the thought's  
 no sin;  
 I think your friends are out, and would be in.

*P.* If merely to come in, sir, they go out,  
 The way they take is strangely round about.

*F.* They too may be corrupted, you'll allow?

*P.* I only call those knaves who are so now.  
 Is that too little? come then, I'll comply—  
 Spirit of Arnall! aid me while I lie:  
 Cobham's a coward, Polwarth is a slave,  
 And Lyttelton a dark designing knave,

St. John has ever been ■ wealthy fool—  
 But let me add, Sir Robert's mighty dull,  
 Has never made a friend in private life,  
 And was, besides, ■ tyrant to his wife.

But pray, when others praise him, do I blame?  
 Call Verres, Wolsey, any odious name?  
 Why rail they then if but ■ wreath of mine,  
 Oh all-accomplish'd St. John! deck thy shrine?

What! shall each spur-gall'd hackney of the day,  
 When Paxton gives him double pots and pay,  
 Or each new-pension'd sycophant, pretend  
 To break my windows if I treat a friend,  
 Then wisely plead to me they meant no hurt,  
 But 'twas my' guest at whom they threw the dirt?  
 Sure if I spare the minister, no rules  
 Of honour bind me not to maul his tools;  
 Sure if they cannot cut, it may be said  
 His saws are toothless, and his hatchet's lead.

It anger'd Turenne, once upon a day,  
 To see a footman kick'd that took his pay;  
 But when he heard th' affront the fellow gave,  
 Knew one ■ man of honour, one a knave,  
 The prudent gen'ral turn'd it to a jest,  
 And begg'd he'd take the pains to kick the rest;

Which not at present having time to do—

**F.** Hold sir! for God's sake; where's th' affront  
to you?

Against your worship when had S...k writ?

Or P...ge pour'd forth the torrent of his wit?

Or grant the bard whose distich all commend

[In pow'r a servant, out of pow'r a friend] ·

To W...le guilty of some venial sin,

What's that to you who ne'er ~~went~~ out nor in?

The priest whose flattery bedropp'd the crown  
How hurt he you? he only stain'd the gown.

And how did, pray, the florid gouth offend,

Whose speech you took, and gave it to a friend?

**P.** Faith it imports not much from whom it  
came;

Whoever borrow'd could not be to blame,

Since the whole house did afterwards the same.

Let courtly wits to wits afford supply,

As hog to hog in huts of Westphaly:

If one, through nature's bounty or his lord's,

Has what the frugal dirty soil affords,

From him the next receives it, thick or thin,

As pure a mess almost as it came in;

The blessed benefit, not there confin'd,  
 Drops to the third, who nuzzles close behind;  
 From tail to mouth they feed and they carouse;  
 The last full fairly gives it to the house.

*F.* This filthy simile, this beastly line,  
 Quite turns my stomach—*P.* So does flatt'ry mine;  
 And all your courtly civet-cats can vent,  
 Perfume to you, to me is excrement.  
 But hear me further—Japhet, 'tis agreed,  
 Writ not, and Chartres scarce could write or read;  
 In all the courts of Pindus guiltless quite;  
 But pens can forge, my friend, that cannot write;  
 And must no egg in Japhlet's face be thrown,  
 Because the deed he forg'd was not my own?  
 Must never patriot then declaim at gin  
 Unless, good man! be has been fairly in?  
 No zealous pastor blame a failing spouse  
 Without a staring reason on his brows?  
 And each blasphemer quite escape the rod,  
 Because the insult's not on man, but God?  
 Ask you what provocation I have had?  
 The strong antipathy of good to bad.  
 When truth or virtue ~~in~~ affront endures,  
 Th' affront is mine, my friend, and should be your's.

Mine as a foe profess'd to false pretence,  
 Who think a coxcomb's honour like his sense;  
 Mine as a friend to ev'ry worthy mind;  
 And mine as man, who feel for all mankind.

*F.* You're strangely proud.

*P.* So proud, I am no slave;  
 So impudent, I own myself no knave;  
 So odd, my country's ruin makes me grave.  
 Yes, I am proud; I must be proud to see  
 Men not afraid of God afraid of me;  
 Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,  
 Yet touch'd and sham'd by ridicule alone.

O sacred weapon! left for truth's defence,  
 Sole dread of folly, vice, and insolence!  
 To all but heav'n-directed hands deny'd,  
 The muse may give thee, but the gods must guide:  
 Rev'rent I touch thee! but with honest zeal,  
 To rouse the watchmen of the public weal,  
 To virtue's work provoke the tardy hall,  
 And goad the prelate slumb'ring in his stall.  
 Ye tinsel insects! whom a court maintains,  
 That counts your beauties only by your stains,  
 Spin all your cobwebs o'er the eye of day!  
 The muse's wing shall brush you all away:

All his grace preaches, all his lordship sings,  
 All that makes saints of queens and gods of kings;  
 All, all but truth, drops dead-born from the press,  
 Like the last gazette or the last address.

When black ambition stains a public cause,  
 A monarch's sword when mad vain-glory draws,  
 Not Waller's wreath can hide the nation's scar,  
 Nor Boileau turn the feather to a star.

Not so when diadem'd with rays divine,  
 Touch'd with the flame that breaks from virtue's  
 shrine,      :      .  
 Her priestess muse forbids the good to die,  
 And opes the temple of eternity.  
 There other trophies deck the truly brave  
 Than such as Anstis casts into the grave;  
 Far other stars than \* and \*\* wear,  
 And may descend to Mordington from Stair;  
 (Such as on Hough's unsully'd mitre shine,  
 Or beam, good Digby! from a heart like thine)  
 Let envy howl, while heav'n's whole chorus sings,  
 And bark at honour not conferr'd by kings;  
 Let flatt'ry sick'ning see the incense rise,  
 Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies:

Truth guards the poet, \*sanctifies the line,  
And makes immortal verse as mean as mine.

Yes, the last pen for freedom let me draw, \*  
When truth stands trembling on the edge of law.  
Here, last of Britons! let your names be read:  
Are none, none living? let me praise the dead;  
And for that cause which made your fathers shine,  
Fall by the votes of their degenerate line.

F. Alas! alas! pray end what you began,  
And write next winter more Essays on Man.

ON RECEIVING FROM  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE LADY FRANCES SHIRLEY  
A STANDISH AND TWO PENS.<sup>a</sup>

Yes, I beheld th' Athenian queen  
Descend in all her sober charms;  
‘ And take,’ she said, and smil’d serene,  
‘ Take at this hand celestial arms:

‘ Secure the radiant weapons wield;  
This golden lance shall guard desert,  
And if a vice dares keep the field,  
This steel shall stab it to the heart.’

Aw’d, on my bended knees I fell,  
Receiv’d the weapons of the sky,  
And dipp’d them in the sable well,  
The fount of fame or infamy.

‘ What well! what weapon?’ Flavia cries,  
‘ A standish, steel, and golden pen!

<sup>a</sup> These lines were occasioned by the poet’s being threatened with a prosecution in the house of lords, for writing the two foregoing Dialogues.

It came from Bertrand's, not the skies;  
I gave it you to write again.

‘ But, friend! take heed whom you attack;  
You'll bring a house (I mean of peers)  
Red, blue, and green, nay, white and black,  
L... and all about your ears.

‘ You'd write as smooth again on glass,  
And run on ivory so glib,  
As not to stick at fool or ass,  
Nor stop at flattery or fib.

‘ Athenian queen! and sober chaunces!  
I tell ye, fool! there's nothing in't.  
‘ Tis Venus, Venus gives these arms;  
In Dryden's Virgil see the print.

‘ Come, if you'll be a quiet soul,  
That dares tell neither truth nor lies,  
I'll list you in the harmless roll  
Of those that sing of these poor eyes.’

END OF VOL. IV.

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